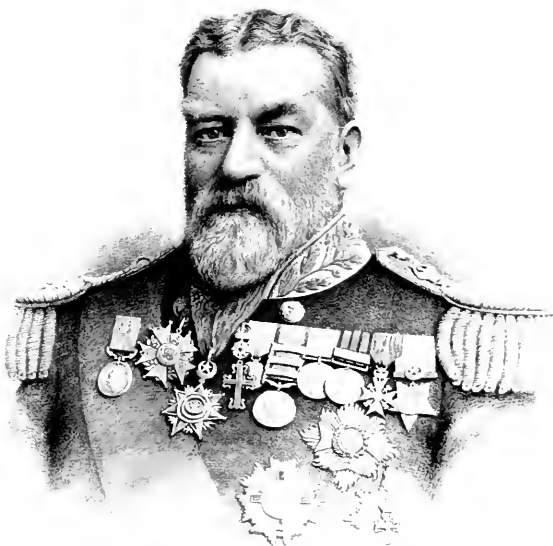




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LIFE OF
ADMIRAL SIR HARRY RAWSON
(1843-1910)



Harry H. Rawson

LONDON EDWARD ARNOLD 1894

LIFE OF ADMIRAL SIR HARRY RAWSON

G.C.B. (MILITARY), G.C.M.G.

GRAND CROSS OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF PORTUGAL

BRILLIANT STAR OF ZANZIBAR

ORDER OF HAMONDIEH AND OSMANIEH

CIVIC CROSS OF BELGIUM

BY

GEOFFREY RAWSON, LIEUT. R.I.M.

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
EDWARD ARNOLD

1914

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PREFACE

THANKS are due, and gratefully acknowledged, to those who kindly assisted in the preparation of this Memoir. To Admiral Sir George Le C. Egerton, K.C.B., I am indebted for information respecting the operations in East Africa which led up to the storming of Mveli, and for reading through and revising some of the proofs.

Rear-Admiral R. H. S. Bacon, D.S.O., kindly allowed me the use of his book, "Benin, the City of Blood," in drawing up the narrative of the Benin Expedition; and Mr. H. Ling Roth has supplied illustrations of some of the trophies brought back from Benin.

I am especially indebted to Paymaster-in-Chief F. Harrison Smith, C.B., who corrected the proofs and otherwise afforded much valuable assistance.

G. R.

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“It is, indeed, notable that there is a generous sentiment in English seamen which, in cases of difficulty and danger, restrains them to their duty and fidelity.”—TURNBULL'S *Voyages and Travels*, 1806.

LIFE OF ADMIRAL SIR HARRY RAWSON

CHAPTER I

Introduction—Birth and parentage—Schooldays—Enters the Royal Navy—Appointed to “Princess Charlotte”—Sails for the East—Situation in China, 1857—His first action—Treaty of Tientsin—Amateur theatricals—Promoted to midshipman.

ACCOUNTS of the lives and times of naval heroes will usually be found to fall into two distinct groups. In the one we find the names of those who have risen to cast a lasting fame over their country by their deeds, who have identified themselves with a particularly bright era in our island history, and whose names are famous and revered even if their services to their country are forgotten or but dimly understood. Such are Drake, Rodney, and Nelson.

Again, there are those whose memories have faded, undistinguished among many, great and small. Perhaps they have lived equally great lives and died as nobly. But familiar only to a small circle of students of naval history, their names are scarcely known to the generality of readers. They have neither risen to world fame nor associated themselves with any particular period. Belated

and scanty memoirs alone remain to keep their memory green.

The object of the following pages is to rescue from possible oblivion the name of one who deserved well of his country. Although it cannot be claimed for Sir Harry Rawson that he rose to the topmost pinnacle of glory attained by Nelson and his compeers, it can at least be proved that he possessed kindred qualities to those immortals. Perhaps he lacked the opportunities, which came to them, of handing his name down to posterity. The hour brings the man, and, in one sense, Rawson's hour never came. But apart from that, his record is indeed remarkable. He served his country for an unbroken period extending over half a century, and was universally acknowledged by his contemporaries to be a most able and energetic officer.

His story will serve to show his undaunted courage, unremitting labour, and inimitable bonhomie as no words could do.

Active service on a large and prolonged scale, that final test of a seaman's greatness, was, it is true, denied to him, since the particular period of naval history with which Sir Harry Rawson was associated was one of profound peace. England had become the acknowledged mistress of the seas, and none arose to challenge her right to the title; and though the fifty years which succeeded the passing of Nelson were marked by naval wars, the main conflict on the sea during the latter half of

the nineteenth century has been a conflict of invention, a conflict between the old and the new ideas.

The time when Rawson joined the Service, early in 1857, constituted an interesting historical period ; in fact, it marked the birth of the modern warship. The old order of canvas and hempen cordage still held the field. Iron and steel as materials for building ships were regarded as new-fangled innovations. The three-decker, with its cloud of canvas, was still the glory of the British Navy. The propulsion of warships by steam was considered an absurd and even dangerous proceeding. The Indian Mutiny had not yet broken out, although distant murmurings already heralded its eruption. Wellington had but recently died, and the glamour of the Napoleonic wars, with their living memory of Nelson and his captains, still lingered over the Service. But time was about to give birth to a new era, and side by side with the new order of things young Rawson grew up.

That he readily adapted himself to the change we may well believe from the success which attended him. There was at the time a school of seamen which openly decried the new-fashioned innovations of iron and steam, which predicted disastrous failure, and prophesied a speedy return to oak and canvas. But he was never one of these, and from the outset of his career set himself to master the new theories and to solve the strange problems which science was fast bringing to his profession.

Besides being a very skilful strategist and tactician, Rawson lived an eventful and stirring life. He was no mere bookworm. From the moment when he joined his first ship in 1857, down to the end of the century, he was engaged in fighting the battles of his Queen and country, and began life as strenuously as he closed it. He was born on November 5, 1843, in Cheshire, the second son and third child of Christopher and Frances Emily Rawson. His mother was a daughter of John Naylor Wright, of Liverpool and Beaumaris, who married a Miss Frances Roe. His father was the direct lineal descendant of a long line of Rawsons who were originally, and are still, settled in Yorkshire.

The Rawsons of Yorkshire, tradition says, are descended from the Saxon family of Rauenchil (Rauenchilson, Rauenson, Rawson), who had been located in the valley of the Aire long before the Norman Conquest. They are a very ancient stock of Yorkshire in the heraldic visitations, of which county their pedigree is amply set forth, and in Domesday Book their holdings of land in Shipley and other properties in the county in 1086 are mentioned. A translation of the original entry is as follows: "M. In Scipeleia (Shipley) Rauenchil had 3 carucates of land for geld, where 2 ploughs can be. Ilbert de Laci has it and (it) is waste. Pasturable wood(land) 1 league in length and half (a league) in breadth. In Hetone ([Check]heaton) Dunstan and Rauenchil had 6 carucates of land for geld, where 3

ploughs can be. Ilbert de Lacy has it now and it is waste."

These lands were in the wapentake of Morley, in the West Riding, and were handed over as spoils to Ilbert de Laci by the Norman Conqueror, William I. Rawson has been the family surname for the last five centuries. Previous to that it was Rauenchilson and Rauenson, and the first mention of the name as it now stands occurs in the poll-tax for the county of York in 1379, where we find the head of the family described as Johannes Rawson.

Harry was christened at Rock Ferry, and was named after his grandmother, who prior to her marriage was Miss Holdsworth. In 1849, when six years old, he was sent to a dame's school at Reading, kept by a Miss Neale; and three years later went to Marlborough College, the then head-master being the celebrated Dr. Cotton, who afterwards became Bishop of Calcutta.

Here he did the usual things—learned his three R's, beat and was beaten, and plagued his master's life out of all reason.

Learning and application to study do not seem to have been his strong points during the time he spent at Marlborough, but he possessed a fund of common sense and good nature, combined with a sense of humour, which never deserted him in after-life.

"One day in class he had been called out by the master for skylarking, and it so happened that he was made to stand between the master's desk and

the fire. After a time the idea struck him to fill the master's pocket with hot coal, which he promptly proceeded to do, much to the edification of the other boys, who were fully alive to the spirit of the occasion. The master, putting his hand in his pocket, incontinently discovered how he had been victimized, and the result can be as easily imagined as described."

Whilst at Marlborough he displayed a great liking for the sea as a profession, and determined to become a sailor. His father did not oppose the lad's resolution. He understood the boy's character, and always maintained that in whatever walk of life he might be placed he would climb to the very top of the tree. Accordingly, in 1855, he was sent to Eastman's Naval Academy at Southsea. Two years later he received a nomination as naval cadet from Sir Charles Woods, First Lord of the Admiralty, and, having passed the necessary examination, was appointed to H.M.S. "Victory" at Portsmouth.

On April 9, 1857, Harry joined the "Princess Charlotte" (Captain George King), then fitting out for Hong-Kong. It was at this time that an accident befell him which at the moment bade fair to end his career for ever. An account of the mishap, taken from the *Morning Herald*, is as follows :

"A curious accident happened to a naval cadet named Rawson last evening on board the 'Princess Charlotte.' The youth slipped off the coamings of the main hatchway, and fell to the bottom of the hold, a depth of thirty feet. He was picked up



SIR HARRY RAWSON AS A NAVAL CADET.

insensible with a frightfully bruised face and right arm, but fortunately no bones were broken, and he is now rapidly recovering under medical care."

Thus Harry commenced to serve his Queen and country!

The "Princess Charlotte" left Spithead on June 27, 1857, for Hong-Kong, having on board a sea-sick but very determined young officer. In some of his early letters home, which have been preserved, he gives some interesting sidelights on naval discipline at that period. Describing his first pay-day, we learn that "out of four hundred and sixty men only fifty were sober in the evening—the crew, not officers [*sic*], because they are not punished for getting drunk on pay-day. There was one man who was sent for, and he began to hit the sentries, so the Commander had him lashed up on the quarter-deck. But some others of the crew said they would not go until he was released, and they came aft and loosed him; so the Commander then put him in irons instead."

Truly the child of thirteen was beginning life early!

After touching at Madeira (July 15), the "Princess Charlotte" proceeded towards the Cape. The food in the gun-room was very bad, chiefly weevilly biscuit and salt meat. At Madeira the mess caterer, a Scotchman, purchased half a dozen hams, and the first night at dinner addressed his messmates:

“Now, gentlemen, this ham is to be treated as a luxury, and not to be made a meal of.”

After the ship left port it was discovered that the remainder of the hams were not hams at all, but merely blocks of wood got up to resemble hams; so there were no more luxuries till they arrived at Cape Town.

“One evening, it being a flat calm, I heard the bo’sun pipe ‘Hands to bathe,’ and coming on deck found all hands swimming over the side. I asked if there were any sharks, and they told me that there were two at that moment swimming astern. I inquired if the men were not afraid, whereupon the bo’sun replied that sharks very seldom come close when so many men are in the water (there being one hundred or more), but I thought it was ‘no go,’ and dressed again.”

Later the “Princess Charlotte” crossed the line, she being the first three-decker of any nation to do so, and Father Neptune was duly welcomed on board. “First our faces were lathered with pea-soup and shaved with razors like this :



“If they like you, they give you No. 1. If they don’t, No. 2; and if they hate you, why, then you get No. 3. I got No. 1, and most of the officers got

off all right; but when the men's turn came, they had some rare good fun. . . . I am in good spirits, and like the sea very much from what I see of it, but this is not a proper man-o'-war; it is more like a merchantman. In a merchant ship, when a man disobeys, you have the pleasure (?) of cobbing him; but here you have to report him, and he gets nothing for it, and you get punished instead."

On September 17 the "Princess Charlotte" left Cape Town, bound for Singapore and Hong-Kong, and finally arrived at the latter port after a voyage of six months and four days! Here Rawson was transferred to the "Calcutta." This vessel, which was but recently sold out of the Navy after nearly eighty years' service, was one of the last wooden walls built at Bombay. She was a two-decked, eightyfour-gun line of battle ship, and was constructed, not of the proverbial oak, but of teak.

It is perhaps necessary to give here a brief account of affairs in China prior to the arrival of the "Princess Charlotte" at Hong-Kong. In the previous year (1856) hostilities had again broken out, consequent on the seizure by the Canton authorities of the "Arrow," a Chinese-owned vessel, flying the British flag, and commanded by an Englishman.

Sir John Bowring, the British representative, demanded an apology, and insisted on the release of the

crew, and on these demands being refused, directed Sir Michael Seymour, the British Admiral, to enforce them. Accordingly Seymour seized the forts guarding the approach to Canton, and demanded free admission to the city for British subjects. This was refused, and in November, 1856, the British ships bombarded Canton, whereupon the Chinese retaliated, setting fire to foreign factories, and murdering a number of Europeans. In the meantime Lord Elgin had been despatched to China, but before his arrival the Indian Mutiny had broken out. When Lord Elgin finally reached Singapore on June 3, 1857, the revolt in Hindustan was in full blaze, and he at once diverted the troops intended for China to Calcutta, and proceeded there himself. After the mutiny had been quelled, Lord Elgin went on to Hong-Kong, and found on arrival that all the British demands had been met with blunt refusals. Accordingly, on December 28, 1857, Canton was again bombarded by the British in co-operation with the French squadron, and during the first week of the New Year the city was in the hands of the Allies and given up to pillage, whilst the Imperial Commissioner, Yeh, was captured and sent a prisoner to India. Such was the position of affairs when young Rawson joined the "Calcutta," under the command of Captain William King-Hall.

Meanwhile there was a lull in the storm whilst the Allies' conditions of peace were sent to Peking; but no satisfactory answer being received, Lord

Elgin determined to carry the war to the very steps of the Celestial throne itself.

The allied fleets (including the "Calcutta") were ordered to the Peiho River, and the surrender of the Taku Forts, which guarded the entrance of the river, curtly demanded and as curtly refused. On the evening of May 19 the boats of the combined fleets were towed by gunboats to the entrance of the river, and remained there all night. On the following morning Sir Michael Seymour delivered an ultimatum, demanding the surrender of the forts in two hours, and no answer having been received at the expiration of the allotted time, the attack commenced, Rawson thus being under fire for the first time, at the age of fourteen. He writes to his mother :

"Ten o'clock had hardly struck when the signal to weigh was given, and as we approached the forts the Chinese opened a heavy fire, which was as hotly returned. Then the gunboats, with all the ships' boats in tow, passed up in line, each firing into the forts and receiving their fire. They were to land the men further up the river, so we had to run the gauntlet of all the forts, two on one side, and three on the other.

"It was a pretty sight to see the gunboats with all the ships' boats in tow, filing into the river under a heavy fire from the forts. The shot flew over us, but now and then struck near us. We went on until we had got past all the forts, when the gunboats

anchored, and all the boats sheered off to the bank. Our Lieutenant had orders to take up the small-arm forming party from the boats, but did not want me to go, because if I was hurt, he would be responsible for it. So I hid behind a big bluejacket, and then we all, English and French, fell into line and rushed on to the forts. . . . At this time the Chinese were running away like mad, and I could not even get within pistol-shot of them."

By noon the English and French ensigns were flying over all the forts, and Harry's first action was over. It is interesting to note that one of the midshipmen of the "Calcutta" at the attack was the present Admiral of the Fleet, Sir A. K. Wilson, V.C., who afterwards rose to be First Sea Lord of the Admiralty.

This smart defeat quickly brought the Celestial Emperor to his senses, and having agreed to come to terms, it was arranged that the Treaty of Peace should be signed at Tientsin. Lord Elgin considerably despatched a gunboat from Tientsin to bring up any officers from the fleet who might desire to be present ; and on June 25 she returned, attesting by a huge freight of some seventy-six officers, with seventy-six full-dress cases and seventy-six cocked hats, the readiness with which the invitation had been accepted.

Among these officers was Rawson. "By the time we got to the Palace it was moonlight. I hurried on so as to get a good place, which I did, having got

next to the tables at which the treaty was to be signed. When the party were all seated, the following conversation ensued between Lord Elgin and the Mandarin, through the interpreter :

“MANDARIN. ‘It is very hot.’

“LORD ELGIN. ‘Not so hot as I expected.’
(Pause.)

“LORD ELGIN. ‘The weather here is not often cold.’

“MANDARIN. ‘Not so cold as your country. I’ve seen ice so thick’ (stretching his arms about two feet).

“LORD ELGIN. ‘I’ve seen ice so thick’ (stretching his arms about four feet).

“MANDARIN. ‘But in Russia I’ve seen ice eighty feet thick!’

“This was too much for Lord Elgin, and a long pause was broken by the Mandarin ordering the feast to be brought in.”

Soon after this the “Calcutta” returned to Hong-Kong for refitting, and whilst there, officers and crew were given a long-needed rest. Theatricals were the order of the day, and that Rawson was a born Thespian is evident from the many programmes he sent home at this time. The principal organizer of these theatricals, A. D. McArthur, Esq., R.N., writes : “One day several boxes arrived from Shanghai, containing a wonderful assortment of dresses, millinery, and materials for ‘making up.’ It was a most amusing scene to see Rawson and Douglas

struggling into female apparel. There were roars of laughter at their antics and endeavours to walk in crinolines, the fashionable dress of the period, and in the efforts they made to make their waists small enough to enable the bodices to meet. It was an impossibility with Rawson, until several luff tackles had been requisitioned for the purpose. He made a wonderfully good girl. Afterwards there was a dress rehearsal, and all the company were very enthusiastic and efficient, though it was feared that Rawson and Douglas would be too lively and upset the self-possession of the others. However, they entered into the spirit of the thing, and a few days later we gave our first public performance, which was marvellously successful, Rawson and Douglas being repeatedly recalled."

The *China Mail* commented on the piece as follows :

"It may be truly said of the Hong-Kong Amateur Theatricals, as was said in the programme of the principal character of the play, that they 'surpassed in intensity anything ever before attempted even at that establishment.' The officers have planned and carried out with a success which seems surprising at a place like Hong-Kong an entertainment remarkable for the excellence of the acting, the beauty of the scenery, and the general completeness of the arrangements. 'The Little Treasure' was the title of the piece. It turns upon the means resorted to by the pet of the family, Gertrude, to bring about a

reconciliation between her father and mother, who have unfortunately quarrelled, and are living in a state of single unblessedness. The half-coaxing, half-threatening manner of this 'Little Treasure' was excellently rendered by Mr. Rawson, naval cadet, who took the part. The threatening tone predominated almost too much for the part of so interesting and pretty a young lady in her treatment of her mamma—in fact, her indignation was positively masculine ; but we were not surprised on hearing that the part of the mother was taken by a brother officer of Gertrude's."

Here is the programme :

A GRAND PERFORMANCE

BY THE OFFICERS OF THE GARRISON, ASSISTED BY THE

OFFICERS OF H.M.S. "CALCUTTA."

THE PERFORMANCE WILL COMMENCE WITH THE

MUCH ADMIRIED PETITE COMÉDIE,

"THE LITTLE TREASURE."

Follows a list of the cast, with—

MR. RAWSON, R.N., AS THE LITTLE TREASURE.

In another play his name actually appears against the character of Ariel, though his weight at the time was considerably over twelve stone !

"Great labour had been expended to make the first appearance of Ariel effective. A complicated system of wires hung from the flies and projected from the wings, invisible to the audience. The

moment for Ariel's entrée arrived, and Rawson, in a costume several sizes too small for him, which yawned great gaps behind, flew gracefully on before the delighted audience. But alas ! to the consternation of all, instead of remaining gracefully poised o'er the footlights, poor Ariel commenced slowly to revolve, gathering momentum at every turn. Some wire had broken or come adrift, and Ariel, in nautical parlance, was 'not under command.' Worse was to follow. Initial velocity being expended, the rotary movement gradually ceased, and finally Ariel came to rest with his back to the audience, and thus sang his song."

Later on, when his voice broke, it was found necessary to have an under-study for the singing parts. This was arranged by stationing a small drummer-boy, possessing a youthful treble voice, in the wings. Whilst he sang, Rawson faced the audience, and by facial expression, endeavoured to convince them that it was he who really was singing.

Some weeks later he was invited out to dine, and after dinner his hostess requested him to oblige the company with a song. "But I don't sing, madam," replied the bashful midddy. "Oh yes, for I have frequently heard you at the theatre," replied the lady. For the sake of the theatrical troupe the secret of the drummer-boy could not be given away, and Rawson remained in the lady's black books for ever after !

The "Calcutta" left Hong-Kong March 19, 1859,

homeward bound with invalids. On April 9, whilst at sea, Rawson completed two years' sea service as a naval cadet, and was duly promoted midshipman in Her Majesty's Fleet, being then fifteen and a half years old.

At Singapore Admiral Seymour left them and went home overland, having been relieved by Sir James Hope: "So we manned the yards, and the Commander sung out, 'Three cheers for Admiral Seymour!' The men were not satisfied with three, and gave him about twenty. I don't believe louder cheers were ever given for any Admiral or anybody else."

He little dreamed that in the years to come his own ears would be saluted by the sound of such cheers for himself.

CHAPTER II

Joins the "Encounter"—Renewed hostilities in China—His first command—Fall of Peking—In Japanese waters—At Shanghai—Saves a marine from drowning—Storming of Ningpo—Fall of Yu-yao and Funghwa—Wounded—Promoted to Sub-Lieutenant—Commandant of Ningpo—Appointed Lieutenant in the "Vulcan"—Return home.

THE "Calcutta" arrived home early in September, and in the following month Rawson left her to join the "Encounter." It is a remarkable fact that the majority of the junior officers of that commission of the "Calcutta" rose to high rank in the Navy, some of them being still alive (1913). Among those who were midshipmen at the time are Admirals of the Fleet Sir Edward Seymour and Sir Arthur Knyvet Wilson, V.C. There has not been another vessel in the navy from which such a large number of junior officers attained flag-rank. Perhaps this is not surprising when we reflect that such men as William King-Hall and Knox-Laughton were respectively Captain and Naval Instructor of the "Calcutta" during this commission.

The appointment to the "Encounter" (Captain Roderick Dew), then fitting out for the East, did not at all coincide with young Rawson's wishes. His parents being in Canada, he was desirous of being

appointed to the Pacific station ; but hearing that there was trouble impending in China, he refrained from asking for a transfer.

The "Encounter" sailed on November 14, 1859, taking Rawson out again on his second cruise. Going out to China in those days was a different matter from what it is now. The old "Encounter," which "leaked like a sieve," rolled along in very leisurely fashion, and on the way out looked in at Rio de Janeiro, where she remained for three weeks provisioning and watering.

In the meantime hostilities had again broken out in China. We have seen how the Treaty of Tientsin was signed on June 26, 1858, and peace concluded. But that peace was not destined to be permanent. The treaty itself led to fresh disputes, which finally came to a head in the autumn of 1859. It had been provided that the Treaty of Tientsin should be ratified in Peking within the year ; but when the representatives of the Allied Governments attempted to proceed up the River Peiho for the purpose, they found the entrance to the river blocked. On June 25, 1859, Admiral Sir James Hope was severely repulsed in a gallant attempt to force a passage, and it was decided that nothing could be done to retrieve this disaster until further reinforcements of ships and men arrived.

After a short stay at Hong-Kong, the "Encounter" was accordingly ordered up north. On arrival at Talienwhan Bay, Captain Dew was ordered to com-

mandeer half a dozen junks, remove the cargoes, and fit them up for the transport of provisions and stores, and it was here that Harry Rawson got his first command.

“H.M.S. COMMISSARIAT JUNK No. 2,
“*June 2, 1860.*

“ . . . I was told off to one of these junks, and they gave me a compass, chart, two bluejackets, and four marines, and told me to make the best of my way back to Talienwhan Bay. There were twenty-five Chinamen on board, and she had a cargo of silk, cotton, and calico. After the ship left us, I set course for our anchorage, and that afternoon I was lying in the cabin when one of my men roused me and said : ‘ You had better get up, sir, as there is something afoot.’ While he went forward to rouse my men, I jumped up and had a look at the Chinamen, who had all mustered aft and were buckling up their waistbands and taking off their superfluous clothing. I was the only one aft, so I got my sword and revolver within reach. Suddenly the leading Chinaman gave a signal, and took a flying leap overboard, followed by all the others. At the time we were five miles from land, but there was a small junk standing towards us, and I saw that they had jumped overboard to be picked up by this boat, so I stood on. But when I had gone two or three hundred yards, I heard a yell, and found that the junk had passed within a few feet of the Chinamen, but would not pick them up. I immediately gave

orders for tacking, but found, to my dismay, that the wind had dropped, and we were in a strong current, rapidly drifting us on to a rocky lee shore, anything but pleasant to be as near as we were, so I let go the anchor. Soon I found I was dragging, but after cutting away cable, I got clear away, and reached the bay at last."

Preparations were now proceeding apace for the landing of the army at the Peiho River. A fleet of transports, numbering one hundred and fifty, were anchored twenty miles north of Peiho, at a place called Peitang; and here the troops, consisting of thirteen thousand Europeans and sepoys from India, six thousand seven hundred French troops, and five thousand from Hong-Kong, all under Sir Hope Grant, were landed on August 1, the enemy's army facing them.

Meanwhile the crews from the ships were hard at work landing provisions for the army, constructing wharves, piers, and storehouses, and transporting all the military commissariat. On September 12 young Rawson was appointed aide-de-camp to Captain Dew, who was accompanying the army to Peking.

After several engagements, at all of which he was present, the army reached Peking. Four members of the advance party were treacherously seized, and died in prison, after excruciating tortures; but stern reprisals followed the dastardly outrage. The Summer Palace was burned to the ground, and three

hundred thousand taels exacted as compensation. Finally, the Celestial Government abjectly surrendered, and on October 24, 1860, the Treaty of Tientsin was ratified within the walls of the Sacred City itself, a British Minister was accepted at Court, and thus ended the three years' war in China.

"Peking is a wretched place," he writes; "very dirty and muddy. The Wall is in a very good state of repair, being sixty feet high and as broad. The Emperor's palace was looted, but I was not there, so did not get any valuables, of which there were a tremendous lot taken, one officer getting £1,000 worth in the shape of a solid gold picture-frame."

At the end of November he was back again on board the "Encounter," and three days later sailed for Japan. Numerous cases having arisen of Europeans being murdered, the British Government ordered Admiral Jones and his ships to Nagasaki in order to make a naval demonstration off the port. On Christmas Day the "Encounter" arrived at Yokohama.

"We had a splendid Christmas dinner, and afterwards invited the Warrant Officers in for some singing. As they were not so vulgar [*sic*] as to drink punch, some grog was put on the table for them. We had a very jolly evening, but the best of the fun was the way in which they murdered the Queen's English, the carpenter pronouncing *w*'s and *v*'s promiscuously, whilst the bo'sun and gunner mixed up all their conversation with sea terms.

They made themselves quite at home, asking each other to take wine, whilst we laughed heartily all the time. Presently the carpenter began to throw plates at my head, until he fell under the table ; the bo'sun became uproarious, and sang lustily to himself in a corner ; while the gunner kept sober until the last, when his feelings overcame him as we all sang ' Auld Lang Syne.' "

On New Year's Day, 1861, the "Encounter," which was then lying at Tokio, left for Yokohama again. He writes: "We heard that one of the hereditary Princes, Mata, who is in open rebellion against the Emperor, had collected six hundred men and sworn to exterminate the Europeans. Mr. Rutherford Alcock, the Consul, was shot in effigy, and everybody expected a row, so the Admiral ordered all the ships to remain, but we do not know how long we shall be here." On February 12 Mr. Erskine, the Secretary to the American Legation at Tokio, was murdered, and the "Encounter" was ordered back there as guardship, the British Minister informing the Emperor that he would be held responsible for the safety of the Europeans. However, matters settled down quietly, and the "Encounter" returned to Shanghai. It was whilst here, on April 1, that Rawson gave proof of his courage and daring. "It was his middle watch, and about 2 a.m., when the marine sentry, being either drunk or asleep, walked right overboard into the Woosung River. Rawson seized a rope, and with only his pea-jacket

off, jumped after him and gave him the rope, but then found the current too strong for him, and he could not regain the ship. However, they were both picked up by a boat, neither of them the worse for their ducking; but it was a dangerous thing to do, though I dare say he did not think much about that. The Captain told me he would recommend him for the Humane Society's medal."* For this act Rawson was thanked on the quarter-deck by the Captain before the ship's company.

Meanwhile the Chinese rebels were again giving trouble, murdering and torturing the Manchus, and burning and pulling down whole towns and villages. The town of Ningpo, ninety-five miles south of Shanghai, was put in a state of defence for the Imperialists to defend themselves against the rebels.

In August, 1861, the "Encounter" sailed north to watch the Russians in Manchuria, first calling at Tsushima, "where the Russians had given offence by landing and hoisting the Russian flag. In reality, our cruise up north was for the express purpose of finding out what the Russians were doing. Afterwards we steamed up the River Amur, where we found a small Russian settlement. The Russians are coming south at a tremendous pace, settling here and there. They keep it very quiet, and, if not stopped, will get all Manchuria and Northern Japan. They are looking for a good harbour further south, as during the winter their large arsenal and

* S. Rawson, Esq.



NAVAL SIDE IN THE FIRST CRICKET MATCH PLAYED IN JAPAN. THE GROUND WAS GUARDED BY TROOPS
AND THE PLAYERS HAD ARMS HANDY.

dockyard at the mouth of the Amur are useless, being blocked with ice and frozen over. They also want to get Tsushima, which is magnificently situated and has splendid harbours. The Admiral has written to the Russian Commodore, asking him in the most cool manner—(1) When they intended to leave Tsushima ; (2) whether they were going to leave their buildings there intact, as first promised to the Japanese ; and (3) whether they intended to return. We also went into Olga Bay and Vladimir Bay ; but seeing no Russians there, steered across for Hakodate, and afterwards to Yokohama, where we heard that in our absence they had tried to murder the Legation, but had not succeeded. I expect we shall soon have a large fleet in Japanese waters, as Mr. Alcock, the British Minister, is sure to tell Lord John Russell that when he applied for a ship to protect him he was told that there was not one to spare. As it is there is nothing to prevent his being murdered in his bed, as they very nearly succeeded in doing.”

On November 6, 1861, the “Encounter” left Yokohama bound for Canton. “Canton is very dangerous now,” he writes, “as the Chinese owe us a grudge for former beatings ; and now that we have withdrawn our troops, it is not safe to land after dark.”

At this time Rawson’s countenance was sunburnt and florid, and his appearance rather short and athletic ; but he soon began to feel the effects of the climate, so perilous to European constitutions.

Christmas Day was spent at Canton in his cot with dysentery. "After dinner the men came aft and asked if they might carry me round the lower deck, to show the good feeling which existed towards me on the part of the ship's company. They said they would carry me very carefully; but sick or not sick, I must go round. So I was placed in a very handsomely decorated chair, and they carried me round."

In March, 1862, the "Encounter" was ordered to Ningpo, the rebels having fired on H.M.S. "Ringdove," then lying there. On arrival, Captain Dew, the senior naval officer, sent in an ultimatum to the rebels to dismantle their forts; but as the only reply was to open fire, it was decided to storm them.

"The Captain sent for Douglas and myself to head the scaling party, as he determined to take the place by assault. We placed the scaling-ladders against the walls and ran the field-piece up. I had the trigger-line, and as soon as the gun was laid the Captain gave the word. I fired, and then we all rushed for the ladder, the officers being where they always ought to be, well to the front. I was half-way up when smash went the ladder, and down I came flop on the ground. However, I jumped up and got on to No. 2, followed closely by the bo'sun. We hadn't got up half a dozen rungs when that one broke down too, so we immediately jumped up No. 3. One of my men, named Davis, was before me, and

as he was climbing over the parapet he was shot through the chest, fell backwards, and, after nearly taking me with him, dropped dead at the foot of the ladder. 'Up' was the order of the day. As soon as we got to the top we made a rush for the rebels, who were clustered in a heap like bees. I was firing away, when a man next me said, 'I'm hard hit, sir'; so I turned, and with my handkerchief clapped on a tourniquet and stopped the bleeding. I hadn't finished, when a marine fell against me severely wounded, and I had to tie him up. Then I seized his rifle, and we started off along the wall to get possession of the bridge. I and three others were in front, and were soon joined by three or four more, when we commenced some sharp firing and drove the rebels back, holding the bridge until the Captain, with the main body of the men, came up. We had taken a walled city in the face of fifteen thousand of the enemy with a force of only a hundred and ninety-seven men. But all was not yet over, for about five hundred of the rebels had reorganized themselves and were coming back to the attack. So Captain Dew sings out: 'Marines to the front! Charge! Quick, or you haven't a chance!' Directly I heard this I dashed to the front, and with a cheer we charged 'em. Even now they were advancing, and it was doubtful how far we fifty could fight five hundred, when there was a cheer from the ship lying a quarter of a mile away in the river, and 'bang' went the ten-inch after-

pivot gun, covering us with dust, but so confusing the rebels that they bolted off into the city among the houses, where we could not follow them."

In his report to the Commander-in-Chief the gallant Dew said: "Where all behaved so well, distinction would be invidious, but I have much pleasure in bringing to your notice the conduct of the officers and men on this occasion. Lieutenant Hugh Davis, with Mr. H. H. Rawson, commanded the seamen with great distinction and ability."

On July 17 the "Encounter" men were present at the taking of Yu-yao, and three months later Rawson was again in the firing-line. The occasion was the driving out of the rebel forces from Funghwa, a town forty miles up the river from Ningpo. An expedition consisting of British, French, and Chinese Imperial troops was organized, and started up the river for Funghwa. "We arrived there about noon, and having sent a strong party of the drilled Chinese with two guns round to the North Gate, we advanced on the East Gate. At two o'clock the guns were in position on the broad stone causeway leading up to the gateway, and under one of two huge stone archways which abutted on the road. We then opened fire on the East Gate and the parapets, in order to make an opening for the assault. The rebels at once replied with a heavy fire from guns and musketry all along the wall, and we soon found that they were in great force and well armed. After cannonading the gateway for some time, we found we

could make no impression ; it was backed by a solid wall of masonry many feet thick, but the parapets were lying in heaps. A storming party of four hundred drilled Chinese with scaling-ladders were sent to the assault. They were driven back with heavy loss, and nothing could induce them to make a fresh effort. To reassure them, the guns were run up to the second archway, and Commander Jones, with his officers, was ordered to the front. Away they went gallantly up to the walls under a fierce fusillade from the rebels, clearing away the dead and running up the scaling-ladders. But even with this example the Imperial troops could not be made to budge from the cover they had taken up, and with such a small force it would have been sheer madness to make the assault. So we took shelter under the arch of the gateway, and tried to cut a way through with axes, but the stone masonry defied our efforts. Meanwhile the rebels made the position untenable by throwing down a perfect hurricane of bricks, hot lead, and refuse on us. By this time Bosanquet, Rawson, and half the men were wounded, and we had to come in under a galling fire from the walls.”*

It was in this engagement that Rawson got his first wound, a very severe one, the ball entering his left leg about five inches above the knee, and lodging among the tendons. “I can see him now, coming in, hopping along with a smile on his face, as though

* A. D. McArthur, Esq., R.N.

he were merely engaged in a one-legged race.”* The wound proved sufficiently serious to keep him on the sick-list for over a month, and in a letter to his mother he describes the operation of probing for the bullet as “excruciating torture.” He sent the bullet home to her as a memento of the occasion !

On November 20, 1862, he was promoted Sub-Lieutenant, having passed a First Class examination, and gone over the heads of eighty officers senior to him.

On New Year's Day, 1863, Rawson was sent ashore to take command of the Imperial Chinese troops stationed in the city of Ningpo. They numbered thirteen hundred, and his orders were to get the place into a proper state of defence and drill his men. For three months he remained Military Commandant of the city, being then nineteen years old. Whilst there he made great friends with the Mandarins and city officials, though fully maintaining the discipline of the forces under his charge. “On one occasion he issued invitations to a grand banquet. When the toast of ‘The Queen’ was proposed, someone suggested that it was proper, after drinking Her Majesty's health, to throw the glass over the shoulder and break it. This was explained to the Mandarins, but they must have misunderstood it, for at every toast—and there were many—they drained their glasses and flung them away. In a short time there were very few glasses left, and the Chinese guests

* A. D. McArthur, Esq., R.N.

were all intoxicated, and had to be sent home. It was a most comical spectacle to see the portly, usually stolid, Mandarins gorgeously attired, and bobbing about as they were escorted to their chairs, whilst Rawson gravely wished them 'Good-evening.' But alas! they became so affectionate in their farewells that it was difficult to get rid of them, and I think Rawson himself would have been suffocated in their embraces had we not gone to his rescue."*

On May 10, 1863, he was promoted Lieutenant, and ordered to join the "Vulcan," then under orders for home; but apparently the authorities expected trouble with Japan, and these orders were cancelled, the "Vulcan" remaining on the station for, to him, many weary months. "It seems as if we shall never get our home orders," he writes. "I have not yet got over my sea-sickness, and I am afraid I never shall, for I've never been to sea yet without having an attack, although a short one and soon over. It seems curious, but there are many officers and men in the Service who are always ill, and who apparently will never get over it."

Meanwhile the "Vulcan" was employed in very prosaic duties, transporting troops from one place to another on the China Station, acting guardship, being docked, etc., until the month of June, 1864, when the glad tidings came that they were ordered home with invalids. The "Vulcan" left Hong-Kong on June 9, and after a long and tedious passage,

* A. D. McArthur, Esq., R.N.

arrived at Portsmouth, October 12, 1864, Rawson, thus having served on the China and Japan Stations for six years and eight months, with only one break of two months at home. For his services in the China War he received the medal with three clasps (Taku Forts, 1858; Taku Forts, 1860 ; Peking, 1860), and was several times mentioned in despatches.

CHAPTER III

Appointed to "Excellent"—Joins "Bellerophon"—Description of Channel Squadron—Opening of Suez Canal—Appointed to Royal Yacht—Instrumental in saving life—His marriage—Commander of the "Hercules"—Changes in ideas and methods of naval construction—Applies unsuccessfully for Polar expedition—His nautical sponsors.

ON his return from the East, Rawson was able to get a few days' well-earned rest before commencing his studies at the Naval College. At this time his parents were residing in Canada, and they were naturally anxious that their son should visit them there, having seen practically nothing of him for seven years. However, Rawson writes: "I am afraid it is impossible for me to come across to Canada to see you, my dear father and mother. I can hardly believe I am in England again. Everything so strange and different from our life in the East. You cannot tell how I long to come over to Canada to see you all again. It seems ages since I said 'good-bye.' There is no place like home, and I do not seem to have had a home since I joined the Service. I have had a capital kind letter from Roderick Dew, welcoming me home: one that I am proud of, for was it not written by a Captain to his midshipman? All the

old 'Encounters' have written to welcome me, which shows they have not forgotten me."

In July, 1865, he joined the "Excellent," for gunnery instruction, and remained there for twenty-one months, gaining a First Class certificate and acting as Staff Officer. Whilst in the "Excellent" he was presented at Court by the Duke of Somerset, and on April 22, 1867, he was appointed First and Gunnery Lieutenant of the "Bellerophon," under Captain Macdonald, which shortly afterwards left on a two years' cruise with the Channel and Mediterranean Fleets.

"The collection of ironclads in Plymouth Sound before we sailed was, without doubt, the finest collection of warships in the world. There were in all nine ships: the 'Agincourt,' 'Minotaur,' 'Northumberland,' 'Hercules,' 'Monarch,' 'Warrior,' 'Black Prince,' 'Inconstant,' and 'Bellerophon,' all heavily armed and armour-plated and very good sea-boats. Though few may serve as models in the future, there is no doubt that they are all first-class fighting ships. No foreign fleet can touch them.

"These nine ships represent different types. The 'Agincourt,' 'Northumberland,' and 'Minotaur' are long five-masted rams, good ships but not handy enough, and therefore unlikely to be reproduced.

"The 'Warrior' and 'Black Prince,' which have just returned from towing the Bermuda dock out, were built as ocean-going ironclads, before people would believe that all ironclads should be able to



SIR HARRY RAWSON AS A LIEUTENANT.

take and keep the sea. They are fast and sail well, but are neither sufficiently handy nor heavily enough armed or defended, and are not likely to be copied again.

“The ‘Bellerophon,’ which is next in age, is heavily armed and armoured and has a ram bow. She is the most handy ship in the fleet under steam, but is a bad sailor.

“The ‘Hercules’ is a good sea-boat, fair sailer, very heavily armed and armoured, steady as a rock, and without doubt the finest broadside ship in the world.

“The ‘Monarch’ carries twentyfive-ton guns. The ‘Inconstant’ is one of the new ocean despatch boats, a sixteen-knotter under steam and a good sailer. She is wooden-built, strengthened with armour plates, and carries a battery of twelve-ton guns. She would do great damage to commerce, and be a very formidable adversary.

“Thus you will see that although they have plenty of faults, yet they are undoubtedly the finest fleet ever collected together.”

In May, 1868, the Empress Eugénie arrived at Port Said, in the French Imperial Yacht “Aigle,” for the opening of the Suez Canal. Five ironclads of the British Fleet, including the “Bellerophon,” were present to do honour to the occasion. The Empress, together with the Emperor of Austria and the Crown Prince of Prussia, was conducted in a procession of steamships from sea to sea, followed by the vessels of every European nation.

On January 3, 1870, whilst serving in the "Bellerophon," then at Malta, Rawson was appointed to the Royal Yacht "Victoria and Albert," and commenced a life-long friendship with many members of the Royal Family, who always regarded "Harry Rawson" with the greatest affection and regard. He writes from the yacht: "I was on duty the other day, taking the Queen across to Cowes, and the Captain (H.S.H. Prince of Leiningen) presented me to Her Majesty. . . . We are just off to Grimsby to embark the Prince of Wales, and leave on Saturday morning for Copenhagen, to bring back the Princess of Wales and her children."

Later he writes: "I have been hard at work learning to ride the bicycle, and after having been thrown about like a shuttlecock, have become covered with bruises and at length succeeded in mastering the article. Now I can look forward to many jolly cruises into the country, but they are queer craft and want good steering to keep a straight course." This refers to the high bicycle known as "the kangaroo."

On August 30, 1871, an incident occurred on board the Royal Yacht which is best described in the letter which Captain H.S.H. the Prince of Leiningen, G.C.B., forwarded to the Admiralty, detailing the circumstances :

"SIR,—I have the honour to report that on the afternoon of the 30th ult., whilst Her Majesty's yacht, under my command, was lying in the Scheldt

off Antwerp, a boat containing four ladies, one man, and two boys, was capsized abreast of the after ladder. Three of the passengers were saved at the gangway, but the others were swept astern by the tide, which was running at four knots. The accident was observed by Lieutenant H. H. Rawson and Mr. John Aitkin, Engineer, who immediately lowered themselves over the stern, swam to the assistance of the drowning people, and succeeded in rescuing two of the ladies, whilst boats went to the assistance of the others, so that all were saved. Both the officers are under medical treatment for severe laceration of the hands (which were cut to the bone), caused by their precipitation in lowering themselves by steel hawsers over the stern. The circumstances having come to the knowledge of the King of the Belgians, His Majesty desired that his best thanks be tendered to the officers for their gallantry in hastening at the risk of their lives to the rescue of the ladies.

“ I have, etc.,

“ LEININGEN.”

The two officers received the silver medal of the Royal Humane Society, and the King of the Belgians bestowed on them the Belgian Civic Cross of the second class. Commenting on the incident, Prince Leiningen afterwards wrote in a private letter: “. . . most certainly they would have been drowned had it not been for Rawson and Mr. Aitkin taking to the water and keeping them afloat until picked up

by boats. The danger consisted, not so much in jumping overboard, as in the strong four-knot current which was running at the time, not to speak of an under-current which prevails in the Scheldt. I have seen a man fall overboard from a vessel close alongside us, and go down without even coming up again, though a good swimmer."

On September 7, 1871, Rawson was promoted Commander out of the Royal Yacht, and on October 19 he was married to Miss Florence Alice Shaw, daughter of John R. Shaw, Esq., J.P. and D.L., of Arrowe Park, Cheshire. Thus commenced a life of complete married happiness, only to be terminated by the infinitely sad death of his wife thirty-four years later.

On December 30 of the same year he was appointed Commander of the "Hercules" (Captain W. M. Dowell). His promotion had indeed been rapid. Before he had reached his twenty-eighth birthday he had gained the rank of Commander, and all the honours of the Service lay within his reach. Thus he began his connection with the ship on whose books he was borne for over five years, and on which he left an indelible mark. As Commander of the ship, the whole of the executive work fell on his shoulders. To the Commander, more than to any other officer, fell then, and falls now, the responsibility, endless hard work, manifold troubles and labour entailed in keeping the ship and everybody in her up to the highest state of efficiency.

The time at which Rawson began his long association with the "Hercules" coincided with a great change in the ideas and methods of naval construction. In 1859, when he was still serving in the teak-built ship "Calcutta," the French had launched their epoch-making armour-clad warship, the "Gloire." This was followed by the building of the United States vessel "Monitor," the first step in a series of far-reaching changes which has extended down to the present day. "That strange innovation upon the wooden vessels of the past startled the world by her performances in the American Civil War." In 1862 the wooden line-of-battle ship "Victoria" was considered the *ne plus ultra* of British naval ship-building science, and justly so, as regards beauty of appearance and strength to resist the guns of the period, of which the sixtyeight-pounder was still the heaviest afloat. But now came the "Warrior," the first ironclad ever built for the British Navy, and the old "Victoria" and her sisters were condemned to vanish from the seas. When the "Warrior" first made her appearance the sixtyeight-pounder still held the field, and sail power was yet the dominant factor as a means of propulsion. The "Warrior" herself was fully rigged, and she was succeeded by a long series of full-rigged ironclads, though gradually sails were discontinued.

Later came the "Devastation," a sea-going turret monitor, commenced in 1869. She was an improved design by Sir (then Mr.) E. J. Reid on the United

States "Monitor." She had low freeboard (which was afterward modified) similar to the ill-fated "Captain," but was not designed to carry masts and sails. In fact, the "Devastation" was the first sea-going battleship in the British Navy which depended wholly on steam-power for propulsion. It is curious in these latter days of submarines and aeroplanes to reflect that the "Devastation" was considered by many experts to be a startling and even dangerous innovation—so dangerous that it was thought unwise to let her go to sea alone, and on her first cruise she was convoyed by the "Hercules," in which Rawson was serving as Commander. A contemporary print of the period describes her as "this monster, which has the distinction of being the ugliest vessel in Her Majesty's Navy, has been favoured by smooth seas and fair winds, and has accomplished her first voyage [to Malta] in safety." It was rumoured at the time that she was to be solely employed for harbour defence, but this idea was afterwards modified, owing to her good sea-going qualities, and the "Devastation" made frequent cruises, and was detailed for service as with other ships of the squadron; in fact, her remarkably good behaviour in a sea-way successfully demonstrated that the battleship of the future could and would depend wholly on steam-power for propulsion.

Thus sweeping changes were taking place which could not but affect all the old-established ideas as to conduct of war at sea. It was a time of revolu-

tion in means of propulsion, in armament, and of construction, and it was also a time of great speculation as to the future. Doubts and obscurities remained unsolved, because they had never been brought to the test of actual fighting on an adequate scale. Shipbuilders, naval constructors, admirals, and captains were working in the dark, and knew not what the future might bring forth. How to solve the problem which science had set was the task of thoughtful naval officers of the time. To Rawson himself, then on the threshold of a career which was to end only with the command of the then invincible Channel Squadron, the new order of things appealed with irresistible attraction. The succeeding years were spent in close and earnest study of the manifold branches of his profession. Now commenced the long and arduous spade-work which filled all his time for many years. He reaped his reward, it is true, but success for him was not gained without the attendant labour.

On July 22, 1872, his first child—a daughter—was born, and was christened Alice Evelyn.

Meanwhile Rawson was busily employed as Commander of the “Hercules.” It was while making one of his daily inspections of this vessel that he found it extremely difficult to get through a somewhat small watertight door. In order to get through more easily, Rawson attempted to get in sideways, whereupon a petty officer stationed near drew himself to attention, saluted, and remarked in

a worried tone : "It hain't no good, sir. You 'aven't got no feather-edge."

About the same time a young midshipman was transferred from another ship and ordered to report himself to the Commander of the "Hercules." Rawson inquired why he had left his last ship, whereupon the gallant middy replied in high falsetto tones : "Please, sir, I think it must be because the First Lieutenant spoke unkindly to me, and I called him a d——d fool !"

The "Hercules" was attached to the Channel Squadron under the command of Admiral Phipps Hornby, and the following months were spent in manœuvres and tactics. With the introduction of steam as the sole propelling power all the old ideas of naval warfare were perforce abandoned, and a new school of naval officers arose which attacked the problems set before it in no light-hearted manner.

In addition to these duties, the Channel Squadron had lighter and less warlike tasks to perform. In June, 1873, the Shah of Persia paid a visit to England, and the "Hercules" was one of the ships which escorted him into Dover Roads. "We went halfway across the straits," Rawson writes, "to meet the French escorting squadron of five ships, and everyone felt that the 'Sultan' and 'Hercules' could have made scrap-iron of the whole lot of them in ten minutes."

Later in the same month Rawson was present in Trondhjem Cathedral for the coronation of King

Oscar II., and was invited to the coronation banquet afterwards.

The same month he was appointed one of a committee to report on the system of minor punishments then in vogue in the Service, and to make recommendations to the Admiralty for reforms and modifications.

In August, 1873, the "Hercules" was present at Holyhead for the opening of the breakwater there by the Prince of Wales, and in October the squadron sailed for Lisbon and Vigo. It was whilst on this cruise, when the "Hercules" was lying at Madeira, that she was inspected by the Admiral, Sir Geoffrey Phipps Hornby. "The ship and crew are remarkably clean," he afterwards wrote in his report, "and everything is in excellent order. The officers and men both deserve much credit, and I beg to recommend Commander H. H. Rawson to their lordships' very favourable notice. I have never seen a ship in better order than the 'Hercules,' and he has had a very large share in obtaining such very satisfactory results."

In March, 1874, the fleet were back again at Portsmouth, and the "Hercules" was ordered to undergo a complete refit and overhaul, in anticipation of her being recommissioned as flagship of the Mediterranean station. Meanwhile, Rawson went through a torpedo course, which was finished in September, and after that he was busy getting the "Hercules" in order for her new commission.

Towards the end of the year his interest was excited by hearing that the Government contemplated sending forth an expedition for Polar exploration. This was the expedition which left England in 1875, in the ships "Alert" and "Discovery," under the command of Sir George Nares, K.C.B., and which succeeded in reaching the most northerly point then attained by any Polar explorers. On hearing of the proposed expedition, Rawson at once applied to be appointed to it, but he was not successful, there being no vacancy for an officer of his seniority, though both Sir Leopold McClintock and Admiral Sherard Osborne strongly recommended his claims.

Though Rawson himself was not appointed, his brother was more successful, and accompanied the expedition as Third Lieutenant of the "Discovery." This was Wyatt Rawson, who, seven years later, was destined to meet his death at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir.

Although Rawson was unsuccessful in his efforts to go with the expedition, he was fortunate in possessing good interest at a time when it could be most serviceable to him; but it must, nevertheless, not be forgotten that it was solely and entirely due to his own zeal and ability that he owed such interest. There was little or no active service to be had, and but few opportunities had yet been given to him of distinguishing himself. But he was rapidly becoming a thorough master of his profession, and

his ability and energy were acknowledged by all who came in contact with him. A point in his favour was the excellent school in which he had been trained. No naval officer can fail to be impressed by such names as William King-Hall, Roderick Dew, the Prince of Leiningen, Dowell, Codrington, and Bowden Smith. Yet these were the men who acted as Rawson's nautical sponsors, who instilled into him the very principles by which they themselves were guided, and to which they owed their own success in life.

As an illustration of the high value put on Rawson's ability, it will be sufficient to reproduce the following letter written when another flagship was commissioning for service at the same time as the "Hercules":

"January 26, 1875.

"MY DEAR RAWSON,

"The Admiral and myself are full of hope of getting you to come with us. I trust nothing will happen to dash our airy castle to the ground. I cannot tell you how much I long to get you. Do write and let me know.

"Yours very sincerely,

"HUGH CAMPBELL,

"Captain H.M.S. 'Undaunted.'"

Alas for the writer's hopes! Rawson preferred to be true to his first love, the "Hercules," and declined the offer with many thanks.

On January 18, 1875, a son and heir was born to him and christened Harry Hugh, but to the great grief of his parents lived only a few months. The end of February and beginning of March proved a very trying time, his wife becoming dangerously ill. Fortunately he was able to be with her, and for nine days never left the house, being in constant attendance on her. But happily a complete recovery followed, and Rawson was able to leave England in the flagship "Hercules" with a light heart.

CHAPTER IV

Situation in Near East, 1875—Mediterranean Fleet ordered to Besika Bay—Russo-Turkish war, 1877—"Hercules" returns home and paid off—Promoted to Captain—Flag-Captain in Channel Squadron—Sails for the East—Complications with Russia—Cyprus ceded to England by Turkey—Commandant of Nicosia—Description of Nicosia—Occupation of Cyprus.

IN 1875, when Rawson sailed in the "Hercules" for the Mediterranean, the situation in the Near East was such as to cause great uneasiness at home. The Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina had risen in revolt, and in December of the same year, Austria issued a Note recommending that the Sultan be advised to establish liberty of religion in the revolted provinces. Early in the new year the British Government's acceptance of these proposals was followed by an outbreak of Mohammedan fanaticism at Salonica, resulting in the murder of the French and German consuls. A crisis was thus precipitated, and France and Germany immediately moved their squadrons into Turkish waters, and the British Mediterranean Fleet was ordered to Besika Bay, an exposed anchorage situated at the entrance to the Dardanelles. But the Porte were not to be cowed by the presence of any number of battleships, and stubbornly refused to do anything. Conse-

quently affairs went from bad to worse. In July, Servia and Montenegro openly declared war on Turkey, and the European Powers becoming alarmed, the Berlin Conference was hastily convened. This was followed by the issue of the Berlin Memorandum, in which Prussia, Austria, and Russia proposed a three months' armistice, with efficacious measures as an ultimate resort if peace were not attained before the expiration of the armistice. The British Government, however, rejected the Memorandum, which, as it happened, was never presented to the Porte.

Meanwhile the so-called Bulgarian atrocities produced a tempestuous agitation which swept over England in the autumn of 1876. A special report by Mr. Walter Baring, a member of the Embassy at Constantinople, served, more or less, to confirm the worst details. Lord Derby, the Foreign Minister, addressed an uncompromising reprimand to the Turkish Government; but whilst his chief aim was to avert war at any cost, Lord Beaconsfield, at that time Prime Minister, was mainly anxious to prevent England's old bugbear, Russia, from using the crisis to realize ambitions of long standing. Finally England pressed for an armistice, and in September, 1876, Turkey agreed to a suspension of hostilities. Fresh demands were put forward by the Powers, only to be rejected by the Porte, and at last Russia declared war against Turkey on April 24, 1877. It is unnecessary to detail here the course of that war. Suffice it to say that with the fall of Plevna and abandonment of

Adrianople, Russia planted her foot at the very doors of Constantinople itself. On December 12, 1876, the Mediterranean Squadron, then about to leave Besika Bay in order to winter at Salonika, was ordered to remain at Besika, the British Government fearing a general uprising at Constantinople. Christmas at home that year was characterized by very wintry weather, and Londoners in particular were loud in their complaints of its severity; but their discomfort was luxury when compared with the condition of the crews of the fleet in Besika Bay, where strong northerly gales and heavy snow-storms rendered two anchors down necessary, and steam had to be kept constantly in readiness.

Finally the Admiral's representations took effect, and the fleet was permitted to proceed to Smyrna, glad to leave the uncomfortable and dangerous anchorage at Besika, where they had spent so terrible a Christmas. Rawson used to tell some stories of a certain captain who was serving in this fleet at the time. He was a man of good family, but had got into a habit of dropping his *h*'s, due, it was believed, to his practice when a midshipman of mimicking a messmate.

The vessel which this officer commanded was a frigate, rather crank and very much overmasted. Divine service was being conducted on the main-deck, and the parson was laboriously wading through a long and uninteresting sermon, when the captain, happening to look out of one of the weather ports, saw a squall coming up. After fidgeting about for

a minute or two, he turned round, and with one breath and in the same tone bawled out: "That 'll do, parson; give 'em a blessing. 'Ands, reef tor'ps'ls!" On another occasion this same captain's elderly maiden aunt came on board his ship to lunch. As he was assisting her up the gangway, she turned to him and implored him to look after her skirts, whereupon her gallant nephew replied in a voice of thunder: "Never mind your legs, m'lady—lots of people 'as seen 'em before!"

A more peaceful atmosphere having arisen in the Near East, political considerations no longer rendered the presence of the fleet necessary in Eastern waters, and in April, 1877, the "Hercules" left for Malta, homeward bound. At Malta the Duke of Edinburgh (then in command of the "Sultan"), who had become very much attached to Rawson, invited him to dine on the last night at the Duke's house. "After dinner they each gave me their autographed photographs, and next morning the Duke came aboard and had a long yarn with me in my cabin. When he left, he said, 'Good-bye, Rawson; I hope I shall have the pleasure of serving with you again.'"

On April 3 the "Hercules" paid off at Portsmouth, and Rawson severed his long connection with the old ship. One incident in connection with the paying off of the "Hercules" may not be out of place. "When the Admiral, Sir James Drummond, bade good-bye to the crew, they spontaneously manned the rigging, cheered, threw their caps into

the sea, and cried out, 'Good-bye, Uncle Jim, we are sorry to lose you!' Such an expression speaks volumes for one who could keep good discipline and at the same time was almost revered in his fleet." That the same good feeling prevailed among the officers of the "Hercules" is evident from the subjoined letter written by his late captain to Rawson: "I have been wishing to give you some little thing in remembrance of our time together in the 'Hercules,' and of your valuable assistance, and have therefore ventured to make you a life member of the Royal United Service Institution, which I hope you will do me the favour of accepting." So ended the good old days in the "Hercules."

In the month of May, Rawson was among the fifty-one officers, past and present, of the Royal Yachts who subscribed to a testimonial and address to the Prince of Leiningen on his attaining Flag-rank and relinquishing the command of the "Victoria and Albert," which he had held for twelve years. On June 4, 1877, Rawson was promoted Captain. As a matter of fact, he would have been promoted twelve months earlier but for an unfortunate chain of circumstances. At the time the "Hercules" was ordered to Besika Bay with the rest of the Mediterranean Fleet the Prince of Wales was about to commence his voyage to India in the "Serapis," and he was very anxious that Rawson should be appointed to her, and had also requested the Admiralty to give him the command of the Prince's yacht "Osborne."

“ When the Prince arrived at Malta on his voyage out he spoke to the Admiral, saying, ‘ I am going to ask for Rawson to have command of the ‘ Osborne.’ I must have him, and I hope you won’t mind his being taken away from you.’ ” But the Admiralty decided that they could not spare an officer of Rawson’s seniority and known capacity whilst the position of affairs in the East was so serious, and he was retained in the “ Hercules,” though it was considered at the time that he had missed his promotion by not being allowed to join the “ Serapis.” In fact, in the following year, when Rawson was promoted, the *United Service Gazette* of June 9 contained the following :

“ The last addition to the Captains on the Active List will be received throughout the Service as a well-deserved reward to one of its best officers. It may be remembered that, had it not been for ‘ the good of the Service,’ Commander Rawson would have been appointed to the ‘ Serapis ’ on the occasion of her proceeding to India with the Prince of Wales ; but he could not be spared from Admiral Drummond’s flagship. It is gratifying to find that my Lords have recognized both the deserts and claims of this officer, who but for the good of the Service would have been promoted over twelve months ago.”

On November 10, 1877, when Lord John Hay was appointed senior officer in command of the Channel Squadron, Rawson was offered and accepted the post of Flag-Captain in the “ Minotaur ”; and a few months later, on February 21, 1878, a son

was born to him and christened Henry Christopher Shaw, who, like his father before him, joined the Service.

Early in 1878 the prospect of war, arising out of the Russo-Turkish conflict of that year, again gave cause for anxiety, and supplementary estimates of six million pounds were voted for the Army and Navy.

On January 23, 1878, England was startled by the announcement that the Mediterranean Fleet had been ordered to the Dardanelles, and this was followed later on by Lord John Hay receiving orders to proceed with the Channel Squadron "for the East, under sealed orders," which finally turned out to be Malta. Admiral Phipps-Hornby, then commanding the Mediterranean Squadron, had been ordered to the Straits on January 24, and the Pasha in command at Charnak had given him permission to enter, when telegraphic orders were received from the Admiralty to return to Besika Bay, in consequence of an armistice having been agreed to.

However, on February 7, 1878, in spite of the armistice which they had signed, the Russians had advanced and seized Chatalja, less than thirty miles from Constantinople. The British Government were thoroughly alarmed at the receipt of this news, and decided to send the Mediterranean Fleet through to Constantinople, retaining the Channel Squadron in reserve at Malta. The Mediterranean Squadron anchored ten miles off Constantinople, ostensibly

for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects. At the same time naval and military preparations were urged forward at Woolwich and the dockyards, and reinforcements were hurried out to the Mediterranean.

The Indian Government received orders to despatch troops to Malta, and six thousand three hundred troops embarked at Bombay for Malta on May 2. Lord Napier of Magdala was ordered to hold himself in readiness to take command of a possible expedition, and Sir Garnet Wolseley was named Chief of the Staff. At this time the attitude of the Russian Foreign Office had brought the two nations to the very brink of war. Negotiations for a congress to have been held at Berlin were broken off, and on April 2, Lord Derby, the Foreign Minister, resigned, and was succeeded by Lord Salisbury, who speedily substituted a policy of decision for that of previous indecision.

Meanwhile Captain Rawson had been despatched from the "Minotaur" to examine and report upon the capabilities for defence of the Suez Canal.

On June 13 the Berlin Congress met, and a month later Beaconsfield was able to announce to the cheering crowds in Whitehall the famous "peace with honour."

In return for Great Britain's agreement to defend the Asiatic dominions of the Ottoman Empire by "force of arms," the Sultan promised to introduce all necessary reforms and to hand over the island

of Cyprus for occupation and administration by England at an annual tribute.

On July 2, 1878, the squadron, under the command of Lord John Hay, left Suda Bay, Crete, under sealed orders, it being not then known that Turkey had handed over the island of Cyprus for occupation and administration by the British. "In the absence of information we believed that we were going to Beyrout on secret service, as we started in that direction. However, as we neared the Island of Cyprus on the evening of the 6th we sighted the 'Raleigh,' 'Invincible,' and 'Pallas,' from Admiral Hornby's Mediterranean Squadron; they joined us next morning; so with the 'Minotaur,' 'Black Prince,' and 'Monarch,' our fleet has been increased to six ships. It then became generally known that Cyprus had been conceded to England, and that Lord John Hay had been entrusted with the task of taking over the island in the name of the Queen, and on the 10th the fleet anchored in Larnaka Bay."

On the following day Mr. Walter Baring, the Second Secretary of Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople, accompanied by Samih Pasha, the representative of the Porte, arrived in the despatch vessel "Salamis" from Constantinople. Mr. Baring brought with him the firman of the Sultan ordering, in execution of the Convention concluded on June 4 with England, the cession of the island to Great Britain. Hitherto news had travelled slowly

in the island itself. Only a few of the population were aware of the fact that they were to be handed over to the Government of Great Britain. There was in consequence an amount of excitement to which the society of the island were unaccustomed when Mr. Baring, Captain Rawson, and Samih Pasha landed at Larnaka to arrange for the formal transfer. In the first instance the Pasha proceeded alone to the palace, and orders were issued for the Mussulman and Christian notables of the place to be summoned to meet the representatives of the Queen and Sultan, to be made aware of the nature of the firman, and to be apprised of the fact that henceforth they would be subjects of the British Crown. Accordingly the firman for the cession of the island was read, and accepted by those present on behalf of the population of the island. Meanwhile Mr. Baring had proceeded to Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, twenty-three miles inland. He was accompanied by Captain Rawson, who had orders from the admiral to afford any information regarding provision for the possible necessity of occupying the capital with a force landed from the fleet. He returned an hour before midnight on the same day with his report, and half an hour later again set out for the capital, accompanied by a detachment of marines, to take possession of the city. So little was the harbour known that great difficulty was experienced in landing this detachment. The boats frequently got aground, and had

there been any resistance from the shore, the result must have been disastrous. But the inhabitants were generally very pleased with the change of masters. Trade and property went up in value to an incredible extent, and the marines were accompanied by an immense multitude, amidst enthusiastic cheering.

On the following day Lord John Hay arrived at Nicosia, and with his staff proceeded to the Governor's Palace, where he was received with a Turkish guard of honour. Samih Pasha and the members of the Local Council were present, and, as on the previous occasion, the principal Mussulman and Christian notables had been summoned to give their sanction to the proceedings. Following invariable custom, coffee was first served, and then the President of the Council opened proceedings by expressions of welcome to the visitors. In answer to this address the Admiral made the following speech: "In accordance with a Convention that has been concluded between Her Majesty Queen Victoria and the Sultan of Turkey, I am commanded by Her Majesty's Government to occupy the Island of Cyprus in the name of the Queen, and to assume its temporary administration until the Governor duly appointed by Her Majesty arrives. Any changes that may hereafter be found advisable will be carried out by my successor. The police will be held responsible for the maintenance of order. I shall require all taxes and contributions to the

Government revenue to be paid into the Public Treasury on behalf of the Queen, and I shall hold the proper officials responsible for all monies due to the Treasury."

This very plain and business-like address, spoken in English, was of course not understood by those present, except the word "Victoria," which was echoed by the crowd amidst tumultuous cheering. However, it was very carefully repeated in the vernacular by Mr. Baring, at the close of whose translation the admiral was assured it was perfectly understood. All this took place within the palace, and when Lord John Hay and his staff emerged on their way to the flagstaff, they were followed by large crowds. The marines were drawn up, Captain Rawson hoisted the Union Jack, the flag was saluted, and then Lord John Hay formally announced to the people that Her Majesty Queen Victoria now reigned over Cyprus. The apparent ease with which the British Admiral went through all these formalities particularly impressed the Cypriotes. "One would think," remarked one of them, "that he had been accustomed to take possession of new territory all his life." The proceedings over, the admiral and his staff returned to the fleet in Larnaka Bay.

On July 15 Rawson was appointed Commandant of the capital. "Here I am," he writes, "installed as the first English Commandant of Nicosia, and a fine lot of work I have had getting things in order

and settled down. Such a baking hot twenty-two miles between Larnaka and Nicosia I never came across. We have been having the thermometer at 97°, 98°, and twice 108° inside a thick-walled house. To-morrow (July 22) I go down to Larnaka with the Admiral, and the new Governor (Sir Garnet Wolseley) is expected to arrive. I do not suppose we shall remain much longer in Cyprus, as our work is nearly done. I had the honour of hoisting the flag, and have since worked very hard. I sent in my report, which pleased the Admiral very much, and surprised the Secretary of the Government out here by the amount of information it contained, procured in such a short time. My trips backwards and forwards between Nicosia and Larnaka surprise them most. They cannot understand how I go on without sleep for so long without being knocked up. In ten days I have had forty hours' sleep. Every night at eleven o'clock I go round the whole city by myself."

On the following day (July 22), whilst riding down to Charnaka, his horse bolted and charged into a team of mules. Rawson was thrown and badly hurt, his arm being frightfully bruised. "Though in bed, I am all right, and shall be out of bed this evening; but I had a narrow escape from getting my neck broken. We had hardly got outside Nicosia when the brute was off full gallop, but as there was a long hill in front of us, I did not attempt to pull him in. However, about halfway up we came

across a drove of mules, and just as I was galloping past, the muleteer drove two mules right across my horse. Down they went, with my horse on top of them, whilst I shot out of the saddle a good twelve yards. My arm and elbow were very painful, and I had to remount and ride twenty-two miles down here. The doctor thinks there is nothing broken, and I am going up to Nicosia again to-morrow."

On July 22 Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived at Larnaka with seventeen hundred troops, to take over the Governorship of the island, and on August 1 proceeded to Nicosia, henceforth to be the chief seat of the Government. All the arrangements for the public reception of His Excellency were made by Rawson, who had been Commandant of the city since the formal transfer of the island to Great Britain. The discussion as to the advantages and disadvantages of occupying Cyprus, instead of ceasing with time, appeared to wax hotter and hotter. The whole question was looked at through purely political spectacles, and thus the whole vision became clouded by party bias. The truth of the matter lay in the middle course. Cyprus was not the Eden of Scriptures, as some would represent it. Neither was it the Eden which Dickens describes in "Martin Chuzzlewit," a pestiferous swamp. A well-known German author has given an excellent description of Nicosia.* "After a long and gradual ascent the view of the capital of Cyprus unfolded itself before

* Herr von Löher.

us. Hundreds of palm-trees became visible, then slender minarets, then a massive cathedral, and then in the twinkling of an eye the most complete picture of a beautiful Eastern town, set in a circle of green meadows. It was an Arabian Nights' dream. The sun was about to set, the heaven was golden red, every palm and minaret was bathed in softest roseate light, the most striking object being the semi-Gothic cathedral. Rising darkly among this Oriental splendour, it appeared to have been transplanted from the shores of the Rhine or Seine to this southern land. As we entered the city and walked down the main streets, the blossoms of the apple and the pear were mingled with shrubs of rosemary and figs, whilst the splash of water struck musically on the ear. Nicosia is a city of fountains and flowers. No wonder the Greeks chose Cyprus as the abode of love and beauty. In no city in Europe, Asia, or Africa, are the East and West so wedded together in dress, manners, and speech as in Nicosia. The veil and black mantle are to be seen side by side with the Greek cap and petticoat. The Turkish troops and the sound of the muezzin mingled in chorus with the bells of the cathedral, whilst above all shines that clear, heavenly blue, with its turquoise and sapphire depths."

Such was the city which Rawson governed for three weeks.

On the other hand, we have the correspondent of the *Times* describing the town in far different terms :

“The actual state of the city of Nicosia suggests a mournful comparison with the reputed splendour of Ionian or Venetian supremacy. There seems not a vestige above ground of any past condition higher than abandoned and hopeless apathy. There is but one road properly entitled to the name in the island, that leading from Larnaka to Nicosia. Nicosia itself is little more inviting in character or aspect than any other eastern city. The streets are the same, so narrow that one camel alone can pass, rugged with broken pavement and dustholes, and painfully devoid of fresh air. The bazaars are a little better, as in truth they need to be, for even here they are worse, dirtier, more scantily provided, more offensive in odour, and more wretched in appearance than it is easy to imagine in an island that was once the happy home of Cytherea, and was redolent of the incense of her hundred fragrant altars.”

Meanwhile a very considerable number of British and Indian troops were being landed and quartered in the island. The landing operations were carried on by the bluejackets, the whole of the arrangements being in the hands of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, who was then in command of the “Black Prince,” one of the ships forming the Channel Squadron. It was said at the time that the Duke deserved unqualified praise both for the method and the unremitting vigour of his work. He was himself to be seen about the beach or upon one of the six landing-stages constructed under his direction from four o'clock in the morning until seven at

night. All day horse-boats, launches, and lighters laden with men and stores were going and coming from the ships. The beach was one great stack of cases, bags, and boxes. In fact, since the arrival of Sir Garnet Wolseley there had been a fleet such as has rarely been seen at military work in a peaceful harbour for many years—the “Mino-taur,” “Monarch,” “Invincible,” “Black Prince,” “Raleigh,” “Salamis,” and “Foxhound,” the three troopships “Himalaya,” “Tamar,” and “Orontes,” and twenty hired transports.

On August 4 Rawson was relieved of his command and ordered to return to Larnaka. He writes: “I am glad we are going to be relieved, as the men are breaking down. The first fortnight there was no sickness among them at all, but this last week I have already had to send three officers, six petty officers, and twenty men down to the ship. My work has kept me exposed more than the others, and I am surprised that I have escaped so long. Hot winds, Oriental smells, and mosquitoes, sand-flies, and ants, make life anything but pleasant.” The first Napoleon used to say that the true way to keep men in order was to give them something to do to occupy their minds. During the Mutiny Captain Peel’s naval brigade lost fewer men in the actual privations and fatigues of hard marching under the tropical sun than in loafing about in camps. In Rawson’s case both the axiom of the Emperor and our experience in the Mutiny were corroborated. He led a party

of R.M.A. and R.M.L.I. from Larnaka to Nicosia, twenty-two miles. They started at two in the morning, after a two hours' ineffectual search for bullock-carts, reached Nicosia at four in the afternoon, halted, got a cup of chocolate and a rub down, stood to their arms again, and marched to the ceremony of hoisting the flag, marched back to their quarters, where Rawson gave them a dose of quinine all round, and told them to go to sleep until the cows came home! Not a man was invalided, except the doctor, and he did not follow Rawson's treatment!

The latter writes: "We left last night, and arrived on board after a most tiring, dusty march. No sooner had I got on board than the Admiral told me off as Beach Master, in the place of the Duke of Edinburgh, who is going on leave to-morrow, so I have another heavy job on hand. Before leaving Nicosia with my men, Sir Garnet came down to the Gate and spoke most kindly about the efficient manner in which all my duties had been done, how sorry he was I was going away, and wished to tell the men how pleased he was to be able to write to the Admiral and say how well they had all behaved. Last night I was very shaky with pains in my back and head and shivering fits. I suppose it is the acclimatizing process.

"*Wednesday, 7th.*—A very busy day all yesterday with my new work. The Admiral seems very glad to get me back again, and shunts any amount of work on to me. I still have to carry

my arm in a sling, and it is sometimes painful, but not often. The doctor says it will be four or five months before I can use it properly. I had no signs yesterday of the fever pains, although the doctor who was with me and eighteen men went ill since our return with fever. The Admiralty have sent me out thanks for my report on the Suez Canal, with which they seemed very pleased."

Strenuous days followed for Rawson. It was decided to despatch the Indian troops back again to India, and he had charge of the entire arrangements for the embarkation of the whole force. From 4 a.m. till after dark the work was incessantly carried on, Sundays not excepted. Without a great deal of tact on both sides the relations between naval and military heads of departments are nearly sure to cause friction between clashing interests; but there was no fear of this where Rawson was concerned.

Some idea of the work done may be gathered from the fact that during the last week in July nine thousand troops, with their equipment and baggage, were landed on an open beach without accident to man or horse; two thousand of them were then re-embarked and sent to different parts of Cyprus. After a short interval, which was filled up by clearing steamer after steamer laden with Government stores, all the troops, white and black, excepting the 71st Regiment and part of the 42nd, were again put on board ship for various destinations, without a

single casualty. Altogether, in three months, not less than forty thousand tons of stores were landed by the Navy alone at Larnaka—all this on an open beach under a scorching sun, and with every condition injurious to health.

CHAPTER V

“Minotaur” ordered to Malta—Cruising in Sicilian waters—Steam tactics—Loss of the “Atalanta”—Situation in Egypt—Bombardment of Alexandria—Expeditionary force against Arabi Pasha—Appointed Principal Transport Officer—Flag-Captain in Mediterranean—Appointed to Steam Reserve—Service reforms—Protests against arms supplied—Appointed to command of “Benbow”—Naval Aide-de-Camp to Her Majesty, 1890—Relative strength of European navies, 1891-1893—International amenities—Returns home—Promoted to Flag-rank—Appointed to Committee for Revision of International Code of Signals.

FINALLY, the Navy's part in the occupation of Cyprus came to an end, and the welcome intelligence arrived that the “Minotaur” was ordered to Malta for docking and to give the crew leave. Rest and recreation were sorely needed. Not an officer or man had escaped the effects of the climate, and many were seriously ill. The “Minotaur” remained at Malta for three months, and it was not until February that she left with the remainder of the Channel Squadron for a cruise in Sicilian waters. Rawson writes: “It is not too much to say when I tell you the ‘Minotaur’ is leaving Malta amid the universal regrets of everyone here, who say that the ship has been the life and soul of the place. Since

we came there has been a continual round of amusement, and at our concert in aid of the widows and children of those killed in the explosion on board the 'Thunderer' they raised one hundred and ten pounds.

"Things are beginning to look more settled out here, and in a month or two we should be homeward bound. I think the Russians are tiring, and will be leaving Constantinople soon; and when that occurs, I hope our people will let the Channel Squadron get back into its proper sphere, which is west, and not east, of Gibraltar."

After visiting Syracuse, Palermo, Naples, and other ports, the squadron arrived at Gibraltar on July 1. Whilst there, Lord John Hay, a very keen tactician himself, employed the whole of the steam pinnaces of the fleet and Reserve Squadron in exercising steam tactics for the instruction of the officers. The exercises were placed under the direction of the flag-captain. "I have been running the pinnaces about at steam tactics, I believe, more than any other captain has had the opportunity of doing, and really they have done remarkably well."

Up to the present many of the old exercises were still continued under sail, and found great favour with the older school of naval officer; but manœuvres and tactical formations of a fleet under canvas were restricted and simple, and were often hampered by adverse winds. "Because the sailing-ship carried her weapons in her broadside, it had

become the custom to range ships in line one after another—that is, in line ahead. Gradually the line of battle was modified from being a means of bringing ships into action (which had served its turn when it had placed them in order where they could act) into an unwritten law. The formation of the line, and the maintenance of it throughout the action, was enjoined and confirmed; it was commanded by a standing order, a real law. The inevitable consequence was that, after a fleet had been brought into battle, it was forbidden to close with the enemy, to break in upon him and to take hold. Thus all battles tended to become mere artillery duels, indecisive combats.”* Generally speaking, this scheme of tactics had held sway down to the middle of the last century, but with the universal adoption of steam this orthodoxy was swept away. All the old ideas of the formation of the line and maintenance of it throughout an action were resurrected, and adversely criticized. A completely new system of steam tactics, more simple than the advanced methods of the present day, was devised and introduced, among the exponents of which Rawson must be given a foremost place. It was whilst in command of the “Minotaur” (a five-masted ship carrying thirty-six thousand square feet of canvas and steaming eleven knots) and succeeding ships that he conceived and formulated a system of steam tactics, which reached a very high development in

* “Sea Power,” D. Hannay.

the Channel Squadron, twenty years later, under his command.

But times have changed, even in this short period. Those were the days when the "Majestic" and her sisters were considered the finest fighting ships afloat. With the advent of the all big-gun super-Dreadnought, the old methods of fighting have gone by the board, and the "Majestic" and others of her class relegated to the scrap-heap.

Whilst the squadron was at Gibraltar considerable apprehension was caused by the rumoured loss of the training-ship "Atalanta." This vessel, having on board three hundred young seamen, was last signalled at Bermuda, on her way home to Spithead. But months elapsed, and nothing more was heard of her. The "Atalanta" was a similar vessel to the unfortunate "Eurydice," another training-ship, which foundered in a squall off the Isle of Wight. She possessed no steam power whatever, not even for the condensation of sea-water. The Channel Squadron, then at Gibraltar, was ordered to proceed westward in extended open order, to search for her, but was unsuccessful in its quest; and nothing more has been heard or seen of the "Atalanta" to this day. It is conjectured that she foundered in a gale with all hands.

In December, 1881, the "Minotaur's" four years' commission came to an end, and she was paid off into the Steam Reserve.

Rawson's next period of service was in Egypt.

Affairs in that country had rapidly gone from bad to worse. Since November, 1879, the Dual Control had been established under Major Baring and M. de Blignières. For two years these gentlemen had governed Egypt, and initiated the great work of progress and reform in the country. But this progressive policy was doomed to be hampered by a movement, revolutionary in its character and aims, started by a group of Nationalists, with Arabi Pasha as their nominal head. This party professed to aim at protecting the Egyptian from the grasping tyranny of their Turkish and European oppressors. Right well might the Egyptian have echoed the cry, "Save us from our friends!"

The Government were too weak to suppress the agitations that arose. Compelled, therefore, to make concessions to Arabi and his friends, they found that each concession served but to produce fresh demands. To appease the ever-growing ferment of unrest Arabi was promoted, given a Government post, and finally admitted into the Cabinet as Minister for War.

At last the British representative, alarmed at the turn affairs were taking, plainly told his Government that armed intervention would be necessary. Accordingly the British and French fleets were despatched to Alexandria, where they arrived in May. In the following month many Europeans were murdered by Arabs during a fracas in that city; and finding that Arabi still persisted

in his work of fortifying the ramparts, the British Admiral bombarded the Alexandria forts on July 11, 1882.

Meanwhile the Nationalist leaders prepared to resist by force. The Sultan of Turkey (Egypt's nominal suzerain) was invited to quell the revolt, but hesitated to accept the responsibility. Accordingly, on July 16, the Khedive placed himself under the protection of the British, and Arabi was dismissed from his post as Minister for War and proclaimed a rebel. Their patience exhausted, the British Government determined to employ armed force. France and Italy having declined to co-operate, preparations were made for sending out a large expeditionary force from home to quell Arabi Pasha for ever. Rawson was appointed Principal Transport Officer at the seat of war, and sailed for Egypt on July 29. The course of the war is too well known to need recapitulation. Sir Garnet Wolseley completely outwitted Arabi, and by a well-concerted night-march surprised his army at dawn, and completely defeated it. In that night-march across the desert Rawson's brother Wyatt led the British troops, and, as the charge sounded, received a mortal wound.

Rawson himself reaped no little credit for his unique services as Principal Transport Officer. His name was included in the honours list for a C.B., and he received the special thanks of the Admiralty and the Order of the Osmanieh Third

Class ; but perhaps that which pleased him most was the presentation, in the form of a silver salver, made to him by the captains of fifty-six transports who had served under his orders during the war. The salver bore the following : “ Presented to Captain H. H. Rawson, R.N., C.B., Principal Transport Officer in the Egyptian Expedition, 1882, by the commanders of fifty-six transports serving under him, as a slight recognition of his invariable courtesy and kindness to them in the execution of their duty.” Altogether he had actually under his orders over one hundred merchant captains, and his tact and good humour stood him in good stead. “ Rawson’s power of concentration and freedom from red tape,” wrote a correspondent, “ are a theme of general admiration.” That he had developed administrative abilities of a very high order cannot be doubted, and it was noted at the time that this testimonial was the first of its kind on record. Surely it bore testimony to the admirable concord which existed throughout the war between the Navy and the Merchant Service—concord reflecting credit no less on those who received than on those who issued orders. Exclusive of Her Majesty’s troopships, one hundred and sixty-four transports had been employed in the conveyance of one thousand three hundred and forty-two officers, thirty-five thousand soldiers, and thirteen thousand horses, that had been landed in Egypt, whilst another four thousand troops were

on their way out when Lord Wolseley's famous message was received: "Send no more troops from England; the war is over."

In eight weeks from the original order being received to despatch the troops, Tel-el-Kebir had been fought and won, and Cairo occupied. With equal speed and safety the greater part of the expeditionary force had been brought back to England, a task of no mean magnitude.

Rawson enjoyed a well-earned rest on his return from Egypt, but his services were too valuable to be left long unheeded, and it is, indeed, not remarkable that he had so little leisure on shore. No sooner was one flagship's commission ended than he was invited to join another. Lord John Hay, having been appointed to the command of the Mediterranean Squadron, desired Rawson to go with him as flag-captain, and the offer was accepted. So commenced another period of service in the Mediterranean, and one of peace. Rumours of wars were plentiful. There were countless excursions and alarms. For years the political atmosphere remained stormy, and none knew what the day might bring forth. "Efficiency" and "preparedness" were the watch-words of the Mediterranean Squadron, the ships of which were commanded by such men as Seymour, Fisher, Bedford, Cyprian Bridge, A. K. Wilson, and Gerard Noel. A noble company and worthy to walk in the footsteps of Nelson's "band of brothers."

Russia was considered by many to have designs

on our North-West Frontier of India, and France occupied a position towards us similar to that which Germany holds now. In the autumn of 1884 arose the famous "Navy Scare," created by a series of articles from the pen of the late Mr. W. T. Stead, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. He pointed out that the relative strength of the British and French navies was not such as to inspire confidence in our sea supremacy, and roused the British public to a sense of the danger which threatened them across the Channel.

In the Soudan a condition of tumult and chaos had arisen which necessitated the landing of a naval brigade drawn from the ships of the Mediterranean Fleet. For nearly three years Rawson remained flag-captain in the "Alexandra." This was a happy though strenuous time. Happy, in that he was joined by his wife and children at Malta and spent some weeks in their company. "We have been married thirteen years," he writes, "and have been together out of that time barely three years; but I have only to look around to see that there are many others who are worse off than we are in that respect, so that I cannot complain." But good news was in store for him. The command of the Steam Reserve at Devonport fell vacant, and Rawson was offered and accepted the appointment. For twenty-eight years he had served practically continuously afloat, of which over eight had been in command. Never was a commander more beloved by his crew. When he left the "Alexandra" an inscription was

placed by the men on the lower deck in the Christmas decorations: "Oh, Harry! we do miss you!" He governed men by their reason and by their affections. In his whole life he was never known to act unkindly to an officer or man. He always tempered justice with mercy. Remembering the kindness and encouragement he had received in his youth from his old captains, he never failed in after-life to show the most winning kindness to his midshipmen. Severity of any sort he detested, but though he was very far from being a martinet, his rule has caused his name to come down even to the present day as the beau-ideal of a battleship's commander. Perhaps he bore in mind the precepts laid down by a "Captain in the Royal Navy" of a century ago: "Let him fancy the movements of his ship to be those of a great machine, whose vigour, expertness, utility and effect, are dependent on discipline and dependent on himself. Let discipline be considered as the greatest wheel which sets in motion numberless small ones, the great cause of every success, the vital spring of subordination, the commanding invigorating principle of every action, the power which rewards and protects, whose advantages include all that is derived from the laws, authority, and obedience created with, and expiring only with, his command. Let the health, ease, comfort, and happiness of those under his command be his domestic charge, reserving their strength for opportunities which will compensate his attention.

“A system clear and methodical, the execution of it precise and regular. A friend to good and deserving men, a terror to bad ones, a protector of the weak, and an impartial administrator of the whole.

“Is it not an august sight to see, when the first motive, the ruling principle of a great character who possesses power, is the welfare and happiness of those over whom he presides, who renders justice to all, and dispenses, wherever they become due, rewards and punishments with strict impartiality? Such should be the Commander of every British ship of war. It has always seemed to me that, considering his responsibilities and the great charge committed to his care—the nation’s honour and security—there can be no prouder or nobler position than that of a Commander of a British ship of war.”

What would this “Captain in the Royal Navy” —who wrote these words a century ago, who had its welfare so dearly at heart, who speaks of his ship as that “great machine”—think of the battleship of to-day? The responsibilities seem, out of all proportion, to be increased for our commander of the present time, whose one ship has cost probably more than those of all Nelson’s captains, is more powerful far than all the ships which fought at Trafalgar, and exposed to dangers of which they never dreamed.

Instead of lessening the powers of a commander, Rawson wished to see them increased. Whilst he

was in command of the "Alexandra" he was directed by their Lordships to go thoroughly into the whole question of awards of character to seamen and marines, together with the most convenient form of Service certificates to be adopted, and other cognate matters. Such a task might well have devolved upon a committee of three or even four officers, yet the work was entrusted to Rawson alone, and he tackled it single-handed in addition to his duties as Flag-Captain. The task took him nearly two years to finish. Some idea of the labour entailed may be gathered from the fact that every Flag-officer, Captain, Commander, and Paymaster received a copy of the new scheme for consideration and remarks. These were collected, collated, and condensed by Rawson, and from the whole he drew up the final report. A committee (consisting of Sir Anthony Hiley Hoskins and Captains Lord Walter Kerr and C. E. Domville) was appointed to examine and report on the scheme, and with some few minor exceptions, completely approved and endorsed it. When the report finally appeared, it practically received the unanimous approbation of every naval officer. Among the reforms advocated were increased powers to commanding officers, abolition of the word "exemplary" in the estimation of a seaman's conduct, the substitution of the term "conduct" for "character," and a new scheme for the granting of good-conduct badges, medals, and gratuities.

The love which Rawson bore for the Service made him eager to promote the interests of those who served in it. Few appealed to him in vain, and many instances could be cited of good service rendered to others less fortunate than himself.

One instance will suffice to show his fearless outspokenness when the interests of the Service were in question. During his command of the Steam Reserve at Plymouth, in the late eighties, it was brought to his notice that the cutlasses and sword-bayonets supplied to the "Indus," then under his command, and other vessels, were extremely defective and unfit for the Service. So bad, indeed, were they that many of them bent like hoop-iron. The matter, having been reported to the Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth, came before both Houses of Parliament, and a committee was appointed to inquire into the whole circumstances. In the course of his evidence before the committee Rawson stated : "I should feel it my duty at any time, if I had arms or anything else supplied where the lives of men were at stake, to use any trial or any test or any means to bring to the knowledge of the authorities that things were wrong. I have to protect the bluejackets' lives, and I say these are not proper weapons for them to have. Yet two ships have been commissioned at Plymouth, to my certain knowledge, and have gone out to the East, and the men are armed and are now in front of the enemy at Burmah with exactly the same sort of weapons which the committee have before them now."

The *Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette*, in commenting at the time on this evidence, remarked :

“ Well may Captain Rawson plead with noble indignation the cause of his men, who might have gone, like those in other ships, to face an enemy with weapons not fit to put into men’s hands. If every officer in the Service and every official receiving pay from the nation did his duty as honestly and fearlessly as Captain Harry Holdsworth Rawson, we should soon hear the last of worthless weapons and useless stores.”

The year 1889 was a busy one for Rawson. In addition to the command of the Steam Reserve, he was one of a committee of three appointed to sit at Devonport for the Revision of the General Signal-Book and the Manual of Naval Manœuvres. This committee sat for nearly four years, and at the end the Lords of the Admiralty expressed their appreciation of the satisfactory manner in which the committee performed their important duties. He also took part in the 1889 manœuvres, in command of the “ Warspite,” under Admiral Sir George Tryon, and later in the year, the Signal-Book Committee having finished their labours, was appointed to the command of the “ Benbow ” in the Mediterranean Fleet.

Here he was back again on familiar ground, and speedily fell to his old work with unabated vigour. “ As usual,” he writes, “ I have been hooked in for plenty of outside work. In addition to acting Flag-

Captain until the new flagship comes out, I am President of the Rifle Meeting, Steward of the Race Meetings, member of the Ball Committee, Vice-president of the Naval Canteen, and Secretary of the Naval Rifle Range, President of the Cricket Club, Rackets Club, and Officers' Canteen, and now I have to work up a Reception Committee for the German Fleet, so my time is not wasted."

The "Benbow" was one of the three ships in the navy at that time fitted with 16·25-inch guns. Two were carried, one each in the fore and after barbettes, and the guns weighed one hundred and eleven tons. They each cost twenty thousand pounds to build, and each round fired cost seventy-five pounds.

At the time, these big guns were viewed with suspicion and distrust, and no more were built for the navy, although the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) stated in reply to a question in the House that "their utility and efficiency were undoubted, they showed not the slightest sign of weakness in their construction, and officers and men had complete confidence in them."

In August, 1890, Rawson, being the next senior captain, was appointed Naval Aide-de-camp to Her Majesty, in succession to Captain (now Admiral of the Fleet, Lord) Fisher, who was promoted to flag-rank. For many weeks at a stretch, whilst in the "Benbow," Rawson had been placed in command of detached squadrons of the Mediterranean Fleet. At this time international courtesies between the fleets

were frequent. The German fleet had visited Malta in that year, followed by the French, and receptions and banquets were the order of the day. In a way it was a period of acute political tension. Peace certainly reigned supreme, but it was an armed peace. Since 1871 the burden of naval expenditure, both in ships and men, had been steadily increasing. That preponderance, which was slowly coming to Germany on the Continent as a result of the Franco-Prussian war, had not yet disturbed the balance of power in Europe, nor created that uneasiness which finally led France and Russia to enter into friendly understandings with Great Britain. Circumstances have caused the Mediterranean Sea to play a very large part in the world's history and in *Weltpolitik*, both from a commercial and military point of view. Nation after nation, from the very earliest times, strove and are striving to control it, and the struggle still goes on.

At that time (1891), whatever may be the present condition, England was the greatest maritime nation of the world, though even then her title lay open to doubt. If she then attained her naval zenith, France came perilously near. Many thoughtful naval officers of the day considered the French Navy to be superior to the British. In 1891 a naval officer, who has since become very distinguished,* reported to his Admiral: "In my opinion, if the French fleet were to attack us in the Mediterranean, we should stand a very poor chance."

* Lord Charles Beresford.

England and France were then the two Powers which possessed the largest and best navies, and it was a decidedly open question which of the two was the more powerful. In fact, they may be regarded at that time as practically of equal strength in material for sea war, though, if anything, the advantage lay with England. The broad basis of her sea power remained in her great trade, her large mechanical industries, and her extensive colonial system. We had come to the end of the days of the naval wars of old time. "Manifestations of sea power repeatedly showed themselves, often of great interest and importance as affecting the balance of power among European nations in the Mediterranean. But at the time they were seldom understood, and rarely even discerned by the nations more particularly concerned."* But it is safe to say that Britain's sea power had arrived at this period unshaken and, indeed, more pre-eminent than ever. This was due partly to the revolution in the constructive arts during the latter part of the nineteenth century, which had also been a period of naval peace, and partly to the unusual application of mechanical appliances as opposed to the old reliance on the elements. And both these causes served but to show more than ever the life-and-death importance of an impregnable navy to an island sea power such as England.

Beyond the Battle of Tsushima, steam navies have

* "Encyclopædia Britannica."

as yet made no history which can be quoted as decisive in its teachings ; but from time to time, owing to the introduction of new ideas and new methods, various systems of naval tactics have been radically altered and completely overthrown, whilst the old foundations of strategy remain inviolable.

It was not until 1889 that the Government took seriously to heart the necessity for strengthening the navy. In that year Lord Salisbury had laid down the standard of equality with the strongest foreign Powers, and a Bill was passed prescribing the expenditure of twenty-one millions in seven years on new construction. The Triple Alliance was then in being. Italy had become alienated from France, and overtures made to Great Britain by the Alliance had alarmed both France and Russia. In 1891 the French fleet visited Cronstadt, and in 1893 the visit was returned at Toulon. Two years later a formal alliance was announced between France and Russia. Thus, on the one hand, Austria, Germany, and Italy formed the Triple Alliance ; on the other hand, France and Russia announced the Dual Alliance, whilst England ostensibly maintained her policy of splendid isolation.

Meanwhile this state of tension was not allowed to interfere with the ordinary superficial international courtesies. In July, 1891, the British Detached Squadron, under Captain Rawson's command, visited Venice, and entertained the King and Queen of Italy on board the "Benbow." In his speech at the

luncheon given in his honour on that occasion King Humbert said: "I drink to the health of Her Majesty and to the prosperity of the great English people, the faithful friends of Italy in the past as in the happy future. I drink to her glorious and powerful fleet, and in this my toast I know that the entire Italian people joins with me." In his reply Captain Rawson remarked: "I venture to express full confidence that the cordial relations existing between Italy and Great Britain will continue to be in the future what they have been in the past." These two speeches far exceeded in significance the customary compliments interchanged on such occasions.

It may be accepted that the words of King Humbert and Captain Rawson's reply were intended to make the much-discussed attitude of Britain towards the Triple Alliance thoroughly clear to the whole world. The emphasis of loyal English friendship for Italy under such circumstances bore the character of a pre-arranged demonstration, which removed the last vestige of a doubt as to England's attitude towards the Triple Alliance.

The significant presence of four British warships, and the evident desire on both sides to emphasize the amity existing between the two countries, was the subject of comment in all the European capitals for some time.

So Rawson played his part in European politics, a rôle he was frequently destined to repeat afterwards.

The "Benbow" returned to England in October, 1891, and for five months he remained on half-pay—an unusual experience for him. However, it was but the prelude to further advancement.

On February 26, 1892, he was promoted to Rear-Admiral, after fifteen years' service as Captain, being then just over forty-eight years of age. During that time he had been in command of several battle-ships, and was successively flag-captain to five admirals.

Being reduced to a further spell of half-pay consequent on his promotion to flag-rank, Rawson was at last able to spend his leisure hours with his family, of whom he had seen but little. At this time his wife and children were living at Southsea, whither they had gone after the birth of his second surviving son, Wyatt, and here he settled down to the quiet life of a family man.

It was the first spell of leave of any duration he had had for many years, and his time was amply filled in visiting his friends and relatives, indulging in his favourite sport of shooting, and corresponding with his former brother officers and chiefs. Like most sailors, he was essentially a family man, and used to say he could never be completely happy when away from his wife and children. A model father, he spent hours in the company of his two sons and daughter, and entered with zest into their work and play. But his chief joy remained in his wife. To him she was the be-all and end-all of his

existence, a true helpmate, sharer of his joys and sorrows, and if he reaped honour, he was glad for her sake.

His restless energy was amazing. He frequently rose at 5.30 in the morning, in order to catch the first train up to town. After a heavy day's work, he would travel by the night-train down to his brother-in-law's estate in Scotland, and tramp the moors with his gun the whole of the next day. He seldom retired before midnight, and an entry in his diary frequently appears: "Read till 3 a.m." At times a heavy smoker, he periodically refrained from smoking for a month at a time, in order that the habit might not master him.

Towards the end of 1892, there being no immediate prospect of work for him afloat, Rawson was appointed to the committee which had been formed to undertake the revision of the International Code of Signals. This code, which was first known as the Commercial Code of Signals, was prepared and published in 1857 by a committee which had been appointed to inquire into and report upon the subject of a code of signals to be used at sea. Eighteen flags were then adopted, chiefly those of the Marryat Code, which was then in general use both in this country and abroad, and by permutations of these eighteen flags over seventy-eight thousand signals could be made. The code was accepted by the chief maritime Powers, and provided the best-known system of international communication, not requiring

any knowledge of foreign languages, and for many years met the needs of the Mercantile Marine. But it gradually failed to answer the increasing requirements of ships, and in 1887, thirty years later, a committee was appointed to bring it up to date. Rawson was engaged on this work for nearly three years. He submitted to his colleagues a memorandum in which he advocated the following important changes: (*a*) That eight new flags be adopted, thus providing a flag for each letter of the alphabet; (*b*) that a special pennant be added to the code to indicate that the signal made is in the International Code; (*c*) to make the quarantine flags international; (*d*) to retain the spelling-table; and (*e*) to add an additional compass-table in degrees. All these proposals were welcomed and approved of by the committee, and drafted into the new code, which is in use at the present day. The number of signals actually provided in the old code which could be made by the code flags was thirty-four thousand three hundred and nineteen. By means of the eight additional flags adopted in the new code three hundred and seventy-five thousand and seventy-six signals could be made. Thus, by means of the additional new flags, many of the more important signals which had to be made by three flags were converted into two-flag signals, and all the four-flag signals (excluding those representing the names of places and of ships) in the old code can now be made by three-flag signals. The abolition of all

four-flag hoists for general signals greatly increased the rapidity of signalling, whilst it also tended to secure another essential in efficient signalling—namely, accuracy—for every flag in a signal affords an extra risk of mistake.

These advantages appeared to the committee so important that they did not hesitate to accept the eight new flags, although the step involved the preparation of an entirely new Signal-Book.

Rawson, in conjunction with Commander H. M. Pugh, the secretary of the committee, devoted an immense amount of labour to this work. Day after day for three years there occurs in his diary the oft-repeated phrase: “At work on Signal-Book”; and when his appointment to the command of the Cape station necessitated his resignation from the committee, the chairman wrote to him: “I cannot but express my deep regret that the Signal Committee are thus deprived of your exceptionally valuable help. For my own part, I do not know how to express my gratitude for the ability and zeal which you have at all times placed at the disposal of the committee, of which the Signal-Book has reaped the inestimable advantage.”

CHAPTER VI

Commander-in-chief at Cape of Good Hope, 1895—East Africa rebellion, 1896—The storming of Mveli—A defence scheme for South Africa—The bombardment of Zanzibar—Effects of bombardment.

ON May 4, 1895, Rear-Admiral Rawson was appointed Commander-in-chief at the Cape of Good Hope, and his flag was hoisted for the first time on board H.M.S. "Inflexible" at Portsmouth. The Cape Squadron then consisted of the "St. George" (flagship), "Philomel," "Phœbe," "Racoon," "Blonde," "Barrosa," "Swallow," "Magpie," "Sparrow," "Widgeon," "Thrush," "Alecto," "Herald," "Mosquito," and "Penelope"—in all fifteen ships, but small, and mainly adapted for police work.

Rawson's tenure of the Cape command was marked by several "little wars."

Of these the three most important were the storming of Mveli, the bombardment of Zanzibar, and the capture of Benin City. In giving an account of the first of these it is perhaps necessary to briefly recapitulate the sequence of events which led up to the storming of Mveli.

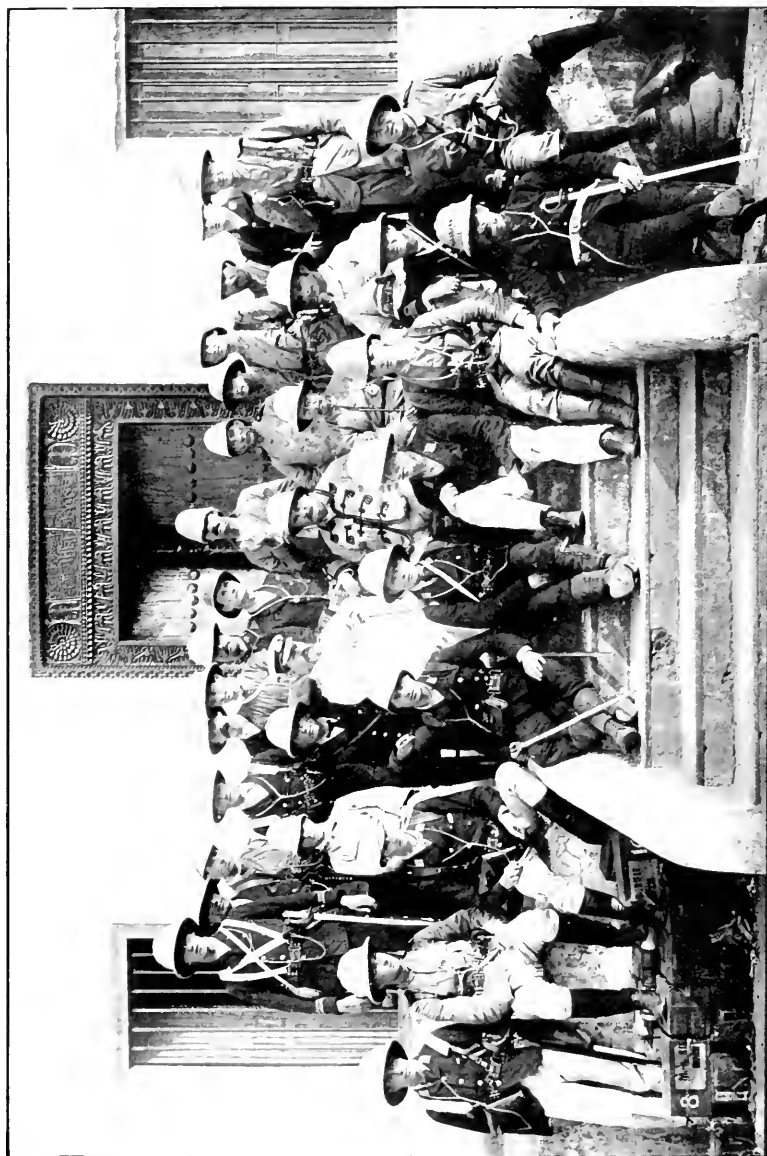
In the beginning of February, 1895, Salim-bin-Hamis, Chief of Takaungu (a small town on the

coast, and headquarters of a district some thirty miles north of Mombassa), died. He was a semi-independent petty Prince in his own district, which was within the territory of the British East Africa Company. On Salim's death, his son, Rashid-bin-Salim, was appointed his successor by the Company; but a kinsman of the new Chief, Mubarak-bin-Rashid, refused to recognize his authority or that of the Company, and set up a rival chieftain, with the aid of his younger brother Aziz.

He seized a large stock of gunpowder, guns, and ammunition, and entrenched himself behind a strongly fortified stockade in the neighbouring town of Gongoro, inland up the River Kilifi. Twelve hundred slaves were prepared to fight for him, and he had the moral, though unofficial, support of M'barak, Chief of Gazi, a powerful chieftain, who practically ruled the whole coast from Mombassa to the German border. Rashid-bin-Salim having been appointed by a representative of the British East Africa Company, Mr. (now Sir) A. H. Harding, the British Consul-General, felt himself bound to uphold Rashid-bin-Salim against the usurper Mubarak. Accordingly he ordered him to lay down his arms and surrender. Mubarak, however, refused, and showed fight. He was thereupon publicly proclaimed a rebel and an outlaw, and an expedition, consisting of three hundred and ten bluejackets, fifty marines, fifty-four Nubians, and one hundred and sixty-four Zanzibar regular troops,

proceeded to Gongoro and burned the place to the ground. Mubarak fled at their approach, and sought refuge with his kinsman M'barak, Chief of Gazi, situated thirty miles south of Mombassa. It was believed that the Chief of Gazi had encouraged Mubarak in his contumacious attitude in the hope of producing disturbances, and of being invited to quell them on his own terms, which would probably have included for himself the recovery of the hereditary Chieftainship of Takaungu; but his overtures were refused by Mr. Hardinge. On the whole, his attitude was externally loyal, and on being invited by General Sir Lloyd Matthews (for whom he entertained a very great regard) to visit Mombassa to discuss the question of the surrender of Mubarak, he at once complied. At first he attempted to persuade the Consul-General and General Matthews to allow him to keep Mubarak prisoner, and to stamp out the rebellion himself; but to this they would not agree, and insisted that he should deliver up Mubarak into their hands. So M'barak returned to Gazi, and finally wrote that it was very difficult for him to bring Mubarak to Mombassa. "Whatever stratagem I make, he will know. Therefore come to Gazi with few men, and I will ensnare him and hand him over to you."

Accordingly, on July 22, Mr. Hardinge and General Matthews, accompanied by a naval force of three hundred and nine men from the "St. George" and "Phœbe," under the command of Admiral



GROUP OF OFFICERS ON THE MUELL EXPEDITION.

Rawson, who had readily agreed to offer his assistance, together with seventy Soudanese, set out for Gazi. Previously Mr. Hardinge had written to Mbarak informing him of their coming, and explaining that they came in force not to threaten, but to assist him (M'barak). To this M'barak replied agreeing to the coming of the force, and promising to hand over the rebels on their appearance.

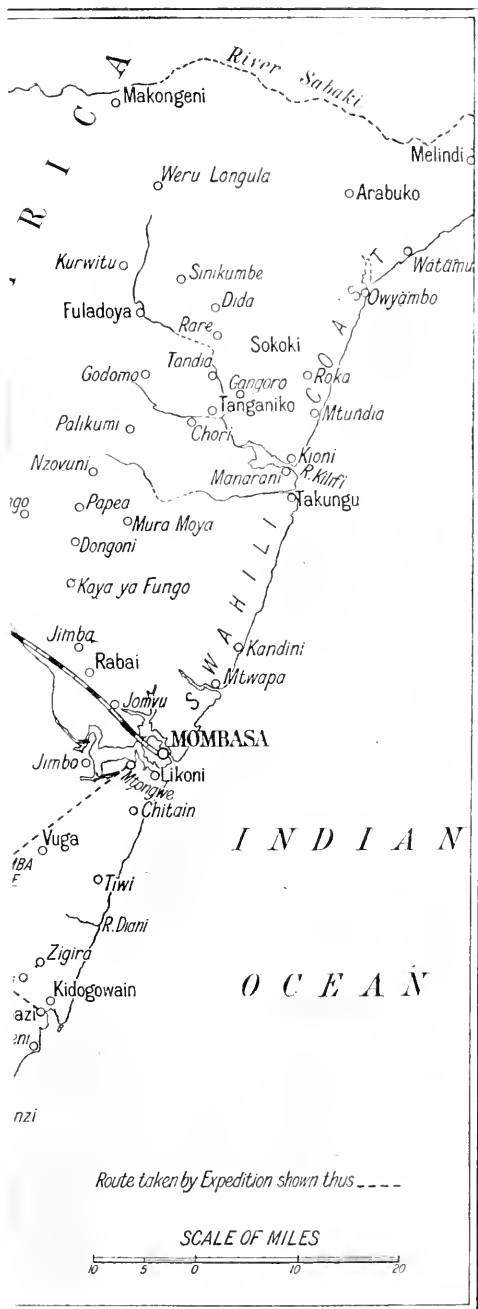
But as the British force approached Gazi, a messenger arrived to say that the rebel Mubarak had bolted to Mweli, closely followed by M'barak, who had evidently thrown in his lot with the rebels and joined them at Mweli, a stronghold sixteen miles north-west of Gazi. Mweli itself was situated on the summit of a high wooded hill surrounded by a very strong stockade and pits with stakes in them, thinly covered with light earth and grass. It was then occupied by Eyoub-bin-M'barak, eldest son of the Chief of Gazi.

Accordingly, the British force remained at Gazi two days, in the hope that some message would arrive from M'barak; but not hearing from him, they proceeded at noon on the 27th, with the greater part of the force, for Mombassa, leaving Captain Rogers in command of the Soudanese, with instructions to hold M'barak's house, a strong stone building easily defended, the Admiral giving orders for a Maxim gun to be placed on the roof, from which the surrounding country could be commanded.

From Mombassa the admiral and consul-general

wrote to M'barak, giving him one more chance to deliver up the rebels ; but a temporizing reply being received, Rawson, after conferring with the consul-general and Sir Lloyd Matthews, and with the approval of the Admiralty, resolved to storm Mveli. A naval expedition, consisting of two hundred and twenty bluejackets, eighty-four marines, sixty Sou-danese, fifty Zanzibaris, and seven hundred porters, with the admiral in command, set out on August 12 for Mveli. He writes in his diary : " M'barak is determined to resist, and is strengthening his stockade at Mveli. We shall have a tough nut to crack, but with God's help can do it."

From Mombassa to Mveli is roughly thirty miles, and the course lay south-west. The march was accomplished in five days, great hardship being experienced from the want of water. On the 17th Mveli Hill lay before them. " Proceeding by a circuitous route through the valley which lies before Mveli Hill, we ascended the slopes of the hill from the north-west, and halted at midday at a point near its summit, situated about fifteen hundred yards from the main northern stockade defending the town, but concealed from view by a slight intervening elevation. Leaving the carriers, we advanced over the brow of the hill to within thirteen hundred yards of the northern stockade, which is surrounded on all sides by thick forest, and the admiral then opened fire with the seven-pounder and with rockets, but without eliciting any reply from the



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THE OPERATIONS AGAINST M'BARUK.

enemy. The Soudanese then moved off to the left to attack the stockade in flank, supported by the men of the 'St. George,' under Captain Egerton's command. Meanwhile the marines, Zanzibaris, and the men of the 'Phœbe,' under the command of Captain MacGill, with one of the Maxims, advanced a few hundred yards farther. The whole force then extended in skirmishing order, charged through the forest, and, joining up with Captain Egerton's division, took the stockade on the left flank. The enemy reserved their fire until the men were within close range, but their resistance was of short duration. As soon as the stockade had been taken, they broke up and fled, though their leader, Zahran-bin-Rashid, the commander of the rebel troops, remained at his post at the main northern stockade to the last, and was shot through the head by a Soudanese as they rushed in. The Gazi, or southern gate of the town, was quickly captured, and two hours from the time at which we began the attack the place was in our hands. The rebel Chiefs themselves escaped through the dense forest, being the first to run, but M'barak himself fled only when he heard that we were actually within the stockade. The next three days were spent in destroying the stockades, which proved to be forty-eight in number. The three main stockades were twelve feet high. All were provided with trenches and internal earthworks, and loopholed for rifles. Besides destroying the stockades, Admiral Rawson caused the forest to

be cleared away, so as to have a broad path open to view and attack from the northern gate into the town, or rather up to its ruins, for all the houses were razed to the ground.”*

On August 21 the expedition marched back to Gazi, embarked, and the Admiral returned to Mombassa, and his share in the suppression of the rebellion came to an end. Unfortunately, there was not at that time a sufficient force to follow up the advantage thus gained. M’barak rallied his scattered forces, and for many months kept up a species of guerilla warfare, until he was finally driven into German territory by the help of Indian troops, and surrendered to the German authorities.

The Admiral thus described the capture of Mweli in his diary :

“ *August 17.*—Pouring with rain and a cold wet day. A dismal seven-mile march. Attacked Mweli at one o’clock. Rushed stockades, and got the place by 3 p.m. ; two killed and five wounded. God guided and helped us. We ought to have lost fifty killed and wounded.”

The officers and men taking part in this expedition were awarded the Africa (General Service) Medal, with “ Mweli ” engraved round the rim.

Political considerations at this time served to give much cause for anxiety. Apart from the conflicting ambitions of the European Powers in their struggles to gain territory in Africa, the situation in South

* British Consul-General’s report.

Africa was one of extreme tension. The rupture between the Boer Republican Government and the Uitlanders was rapidly coming to a head; racial feeling throughout the country was greatly embittered; long droughts in 1895 and 1896 were followed by an outbreak of rinderpest, and, in addition to these troubles, numerous disturbances caused by the acts of native rulers were frequent.

It was a time of great anxiety for Rawson, who, as the British Admiral on the spot, was invested with a very heavy burden of responsibility. In his diary are recorded many consultations with Sir Hercules Robinson, the then High Commissioner, on the state of affairs. Furthermore, he was engaged, in conjunction with Lieutenant-General Goodenough, in an inquiry with reference to the defence scheme for South Africa, and this inquiry resulted in strong recommendations and an apparent determination to act. At that time both East London and Port Elizabeth were without fortifications, whilst Cape Town itself was lacking in any sound scheme of defence. Among other recommendations, Rawson strongly urged on the Admiralty the importance of acquiring land on the foreshore at Kilindini, and the acquisition of a suitable harbour in the vicinity of Mozambique Channel, and for the former purpose the Admiralty authorized him to spend one thousand pounds. With many others, Rawson saw the necessity of keeping pace with those European nations who were rapidly acquiring vast stretches of territory, to the detri-

ment of Great Britain, and for this, if for no other reason, his work may well merit commendation.

In August, 1896, occurred the second of those "little wars" during Admiral Rawson's tenure of the Cape command, to which reference has already been made, though in this case the little war consisted of but one solitary bombardment. The account of this affair reads more like a scene from one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas than an episode in real life. The plot is scarcely thrilling, though the *dénouement* was not without its exciting moments.

On Tuesday, August 25, His Highness the Sultan of Zanzibar died, and it was generally believed at the time that he had been poisoned. In spite of the warnings and remonstrances of the British representative, Mr. Basil S. Cave, Her Majesty's Acting Diplomatic Agent, and General Sir Lloyd Matthews, the late Sultan's Prime Minister and Generalissimo, Sayid Khalid-bin-Burgash, a cousin of the deceased Sultan, forced his way into the palace, followed by a party of armed retainers, the entry being effected by the smashing of a window.

Sayid Khalid had long had designs on the throne, and it was conjectured that he had instigated the plot for poisoning his cousin. The British Government, however, viewed his claim to the throne with disfavour, and in fact rejected it. They were anxious to place another member of the family on the throne—namely, Sayid Hamoud.

Mr. Cave's protests being disregarded, he withdrew, and bluejackets and marines were landed with their guns from the "Thrush," "Philomel," and "Sparrow." Meanwhile Khalid was busy collecting his men, and soon had twelve hundred followers mustered, with nine guns. Eventually this force was joined by some two thousand Persians and Arabs, etc., with the riff-raff of the town, who were provided with arms of every description, and told to hold the palace and surrounding houses. Here, then, was a problem to be settled: whether Khalid should be forcibly ejected, or his claim to the Sultanate admitted. This the "powers that be" had to decide, and meanwhile there was a deadlock. Notices were sent to the different Consulates by Khalid that he was now Sultan, and demanding recognition, whilst a salute from the "Navy" (consisting of the steam corvette "Glasgow") was fired in honour of his accession. To these notices came the general reply that when such recognition was obtained from the British Government his claims should be admitted, but meanwhile all flags would continue to be flown at half-mast!

Business in the town was now suspended, and crowds of Arabs trooped in from the outlying districts, presumably to see the fun. So Tuesday afternoon wore on, and the day waned. The idea of a fight having to be fought got hold upon the populace, and all the English and foreign ladies were invited to the British Agency, the men taking

up their quarters at the English Club, on the roof of which bluejackets and marines were posted with their guns. And so night fell.

“Zanzibar can look very fair when seen in the morning light from the hills behind the city ; it can look full of colour in the enriching darkening light of sunset, with its purpling roofs and copper-glowing foliage ; it can look very beautiful and poetic in the full moonlight and the quiet of the tired city, hushed and still. And Zanzibar did look very beautiful that night, with the undimmed, clear moonshine, the white roofs whiter than by day, the harbour placid, the white ships resting on the blue water, the palace a blaze of light, and the garden of date-trees, with their still foliage.”

But it was an ominous quiet which ruled. Once there came a startling sound as if a shot were fired, and all was astir ; but it was only the accidental bursting of a gun, which, however, effectually roused both sides.

At four o'clock in the morning, on the call to prayer by the Muezzin, and the gun-fire, a thrill was caused by all the occupants of the palace shouting simultaneously in high, shrill tones, responses to some devotions being said, or words addressed to them, and the bluejackets stood to their guns again ; but soon all was quiet once more.

And so Wednesday dawned, and still the deadlock continued. The unchanging situation was enlivened by the arrival of H.M.S. “Raccoon,” who

took up her position abreast of the Custom-house. The morning passed without event, but at midday, signalling between the ships, and the hoisting of signals by all, denoted the coming from the south of the flagship "St. George." Her arrival was not expected till two days later, but was welcomed for more reasons than one.

The Admiral was soon ashore, and after Mr. Cave had explained the situation to him, to-morrow's programme was quickly decided upon. The streets now assumed a martial aspect ; everywhere could be seen guards, sentries, and armed troops. All the ladies were again assembled at the Agency, and the European community received their instructions applying to the possibilities of the morrow.

So all Zanzibar, ashore and afloat, waited for the morning, and conjectured as to its events.

With the morning all was eager anticipation. At seven o'clock an ultimatum had been sent to the palace to the effect that were the flags not hauled down by nine o'clock, the British warships would open fire.

At eight o'clock boats were sent ashore from the flagship, and the embarkation took place of all the English ladies and children. The different ships in harbour now began to shift their position, in order to get out of the way of any possible firing from the palace or the "Glasgow," and steamed round to the southern side of the harbour.

The "Thrush," "Sparrow," and "Racoon" were

in the order named, then farther along came the "Philomel," between the "Raccoon" and "St. George." By the moving away of the other ships the Sultan's man-o'-war "Glasgow" was left free to fire in any direction, but her broadside was exposed to the after-guns of the "St. George," should it be necessary to silence her. At a quarter to nine a small swift launch was seen coming off from shore, and a message was anticipated; but she evidently bore a command to the "Glasgow" to take part in what might happen, for her decks were cleared for action, and her guns were seen to be pointed at the "St. George."

The ladies were now put in as safe a place as possible, yet so that they might see something of what was going on.

"Two bells" rang out from the ships, being a little ahead of the palace clock; the signal to prepare for action had been made five minutes before. Then followed some three minutes of suspense, whilst all on board waited for the palace clock to strike nine.

At last it struck—the palace flag remained hoisted. Up went the signal to open fire, and the first long roll of smoke and tongue of flame shot out from the "Thrush." Almost immediately the other ships followed suit, and the fire was at once returned from all parts of the palace, and the engagement became general. Soon it was seen that the "Glasgow" had opened fire, and, with incredible

audacity, on the flagship! The doubtful compliment was promptly acknowledged, and a return fire sent from a small gun, the Admiral having ordered that she was not to be fired on unless she assumed the aggressive. Right into her wooden side the shot crashed, and the "Racoon" and "Philomel" also paid her some attention; but the insignificant part the "Glasgow" played only attracted notice now and then.

Through the general roar and crashing came now and again the sound of the Maxims, whilst, as the smoke cleared, a general view of the engagement was obtained.

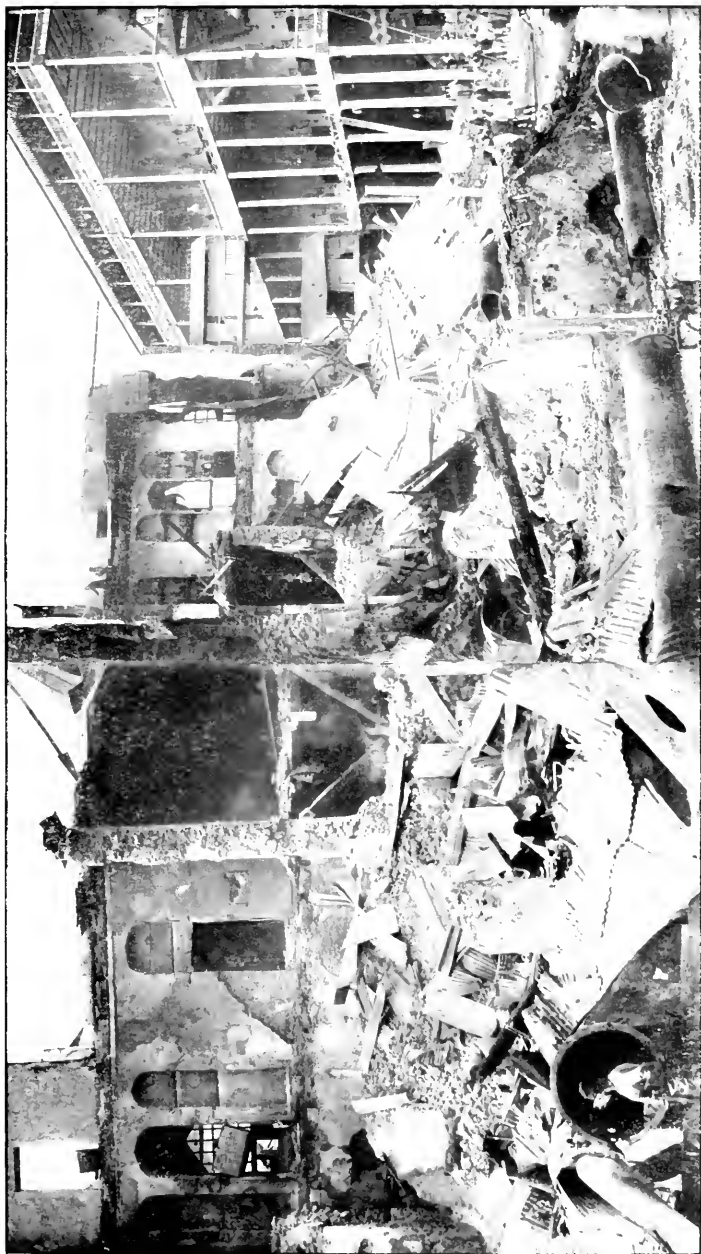
Meanwhile the "Glasgow" opened fire again, and received from the "St. George" a silencer from a six-inch gun. The "Philomel" planted a shot right in her bows, and shortly after the "Racoon" cleared her decks with a shell, which set her on fire.

The bombardment had now lasted twenty minutes, and still the fire was returned. Now every shot seemed to tell, and great masses of masonry began falling in all directions. Once more the "Glasgow," now well ablaze, fired at the "St. George." Three times the flagship's six-inch projectiles crashed into her side at the waterline. She quivered from stem to stern, and began, slowly but surely, to settle down. Soon the Sultan's red flag was hauled down, and the Union Jack hoisted at the mainmast. Presently she was seen to be foundering fast, and, heeling over

to starboard, slowly sank. Three of her crew were killed, six had been drowned, and the remainder were brought on board the "St. George."

Ashore, fearful damage was being done every moment. At the corner of the palace nearest the English Club a persistent fire was kept up, shell after shell being planted there, until at last an enormous gaping hole showed, and soon all was silent from that quarter, though the firing from other parts of the palace still continued at intervals. Then, down slowly fluttered the palace flag, amid clapping and cheering from on board. The firing had lessened considerably, and a pause or two being tried to see if resistance were ended, the "Cease fire" was sounded thirty-seven minutes after the bombardment had begun. All of the palace which was not in ruins was in flames, and presently the magazine blew up. The palace square was strewn with wreckage, and amidst the débris lay the dead. Five hundred killed and wounded was the toll, and two hundred and fifty prisoners were captured, together with two hundred rifles. Our forces were extraordinarily fortunate, only one bluejacket being seriously wounded, and this in spite of the fact that the "Thrush" was hit over one hundred times, and the other ships repeatedly.

That afternoon all the preliminaries for the proclamation of the new Sultan were concluded, the Shauri being held in the Custom-house. A salute of twenty-one guns was fired from the ships,



DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE BOMBARDMENT OF ZANZIBAR.

and the flagship's band played the National Anthem. The bombardment and its object were accomplished, the display of force providing a wholesome correction of extraordinarily inadequate ideas of what a great Power has behind it in enforcing a course of action it has determined should be followed. It was one of those things which occasionally has to be done in order that worse may not follow. If the usurper had not been firmly dealt with, he might have been able to create a state of turbulence, disorder, and rapine, which would have desolated the country.

From the first Khalid proved himself obstinate and unable to listen to reason, and it may be justly said that he brought his fate upon himself. Truly it can be said that the last state of that man was worse than the first — the palace knocked about his ears, himself a refugee and fugitive from justice.

It was a case in which promptitude was a virtue, and there was no lack of that. Action no doubt was singularly prompt, but it was suited to the swiftness of the emergency. Zanzibar was ours to do what we liked with, and it was only a question whether we should continue to maintain a nominal Sultan, whose rule was the centre of constant disturbing and distracting intrigues, or whether we should take the administration directly into our own hands. The bombardment was not a great feat of arms, nor a great feat of any kind, but it demon-

strated the watchfulness of the Navy, the celerity with which its aid may be invoked in any corner of the world in which it may be wanted, and the self-reliance and presence of mind with which the naval might of England may be employed wherever necessary.

Thus was the usurper Khalid ousted, and, with so stormy a preface, the accession of His Highness Sayid Hamoud, the rightful Sultan, announced. *Punch* recites the epilogue :

“ SAYID KHALID’S LAMENT.

“ What was the use of cannon ? What was the use of words ?
We could not come to terms,
For Rawson was one of the early birds,
And I was one of the worms.”

Among the spectators of the bombardment on board the “ St. George ” were Mrs. and Miss Rawson, the Admiral’s wife and daughter, and eight-year-old son Wyatt, who had accompanied him round from Cape Town. As a memento of the occasion, Wyatt was presented by the newly installed Sultan with a gold watch, whilst the ladies were presented by His Highness with a special decoration in the form of a rich gold necklace and pendant star bearing his monogram. The Admiral himself received a gold-mounted sword from the grateful monarch, whilst the Admiralty expressed their thanks in the following letter : “ I am commanded by their Lordships to convey to you the expression, in which my Lords

fully concur, of the Marquis of Salisbury's high appreciation of the valuable and timely assistance rendered by the naval force in suppressing the usurper and maintaining the authority of Great Britain as the protecting Power. My Lords have received with much satisfaction your report of the zeal and energy displayed by the officers and men under your command, and request you will convey to all concerned the expression of their approbation."

Among many other letters of congratulation at the time, the Admiral received this amusing epistle :

"SIR,

"I trust you will pardon my presumption in offering you my humble congratulations on your recent success at Zanzibar, of which forty minutes the illustrated papers have shown the effect. I should like to add that your kindness and sympathy to the mother of William B——, stoker, H.M.S. 'Benbow,' is gratefully remembered, or to quote her own words : 'I shall never forget his kindness at the time of poor Bill's death.' As a chum of the deceased, I was sent to the Hospital to inquire if he had left any dying message, which unfortunately he had not. Your action, Sir, reminds me of John Sobieski, the Polish King, who sent the brief despatch, 'veni, vidi, vici,' I came, I saw, I conquered ; I was sorry to see the usurper was in such a hurry that he forgot to have a personal interview, for I believe, Sir, with

all respect, you would have fixed him up properly.
Wishing you every success, per mare, per terram,

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Yours respectfully,

“ G. S. D——

“ (Late Stoker, H.M.S. ‘ Benbow.’) ”

For his services on this occasion the Admiral received the First Class Brilliant Star of Zanzibar, and was promoted to the Order of Hamoudieh.

CHAPTER VII

Massacre of Englishmen at Benin—Punitive expedition ordered—Ju-ju—Preparations for expedition—Plan of campaign—Reinforcements arrive—Expedition lands—Proceeds to Ologbo—First brush with the enemy—Difficulties of bush-fighting—Determined resistance of enemy—Plan of campaign altered—Further advance of expedition—Absence of water—Outlook ominous—Hasty rearrangements—Flying column formed—Advance on Benin—Bush warfare.

EARLY in 1897 the Cape Squadron was once more called upon to take its part in another “little war,” though on this occasion matters assumed a more serious aspect than in the case of the Zanzibar episode.

Before describing the Benin Expedition, it is perhaps desirable to briefly recapitulate the events which led up to, and were in fact the immediate cause of, the despatch of the expedition.

On January 2, 1897, a party of Englishmen, headed by Acting Consul-General Phillips, and consisting of Major Crauford, Captains Maling and Boisragon, Dr. Elliott, and Messrs. Campbell, Locke, Powis, and Gordon, with two hundred carriers, set out from Sapele, on the Benin River, on a peaceful mission to the King of Benin, their object being to gain from him certain trading concessions within his

territory. Many gifts were taken to placate the King, and, at the express wish of the leader of the party, no arms were carried.

After proceeding up Gwato Creek to Gwato, the party landed and began the march overland to Benin, the route lying through dense forest, which made the approach to the capital extremely difficult. The majority of the carriers were sent on ahead, whilst the Englishmen followed in the rear ; and although messages were repeatedly brought from the King, saying that he did not wish to receive the party, since he was making ju-ju, Mr. Phillips replied that the mission was of importance and could not be delayed.

When nearing the town, the party suddenly came to a narrow path, where the dead bodies of some carriers, fearfully mutilated, were heaped on the road, presenting a frightful spectacle, the work evidently having been done with spears and cutlasses. At this moment the party were fired upon from an ambuscade, both in front and rear. Phillips, Elliott, Maling, Gordon, and Powis were killed on the spot. Major Crauford was wounded, and was picked up by Captain Boisragon and Mr. Locke ; but as they were carrying him away, he was wounded again, and died almost immediately. Before expiring, however, he implored them to set him down and run for their lives, declaring that it was all over with him. It was stated at the time that Mr. Campbell was captured and taken into the town, where the

King refused to allow him to remain, whereupon he was carried away and put to death ; but this report was afterwards contradicted by one of the survivors, Captain Boisragon.

In the meantime Locke and Boisragon had escaped into the bush, where they wandered for five days, enduring the most terrible privations, before they were eventually rescued. The two men existed during that time entirely on cassava leaves, and the only liquid they had with which to quench their burning thirst was the dew off the leaves. Finally they encountered some friendly natives, who conveyed them down the river in a canoe, where they were met by a launch with a relief party on board, to which they were transferred.

Such is the bald narrative of this most tragic ending to a peaceful mission. Rightly or wrongly, it was attributed to the treachery of the King, and the British Government quickly decided that he should pay dearly for it, though it was afterwards found that he had not been the principal instigator of the crime.

One of the reasons given by the King for his refusal to receive the mission was that he was making ju-ju for the soul of his royal father. Unfortunately, this was the time chosen by Phillips for his visit, and as ju-ju in this case meant the crucifixion of some scores of slaves, the visit was declined by the King, with the unfortunate result narrated above. But the Consul-General was bent

upon the visit, for the King had put ju-ju on all the trade in his territory, an embargo which meant ruin for the European traders on the coast.

Ju-ju forbade any man of Benin to cross the water; ju-ju prevented their King setting foot in his capital before he was crowned, or ever leaving it afterwards. The mutilated body of a girl lying slaughtered in the path was a ju-ju to stop the advance of our troops; bronze heads, curiously chased and surmounted by carved elephant tusks, were the ju-ju to which men were sacrificed; and an empty gin-bottle offered at the grave was the same. So when a white explorer, threatened with death for having insulted the local ju-ju by his presence, popped a soda-water cork, the natives fled into the neighbouring forest at the sight of the bubbling Schweppes, and he was spared because his ju-ju was more tremendous than any they could display. Thus ju-ju means many things, from a crucified nigger to a soda-water bottle, from a bit of carved ivory to an embargo on trade. No actual definition of the word can be given according to our notions and ideas. What the Decalogue is to Christianity, so is (or was) ju-ju to the polytheists of the West Coast of Africa. A belief in the fateful ju-ju of foreigners is a better protection for a white man among savage tribes than a whole battery of Maxim guns. There was once a man who recruited Kanakas in a flame-painted dressing-gown, and performed conjuring tricks on the open beach. He

could go unarmed where no other white man dare venture, since his ju-ju was great. So with the soda-water bottle, and so with any white man in ju-ju lands who fills his pockets with the old school-boy tricks—squibs and dry batteries.

Rawson's rockets fired into the town did more to capture Benin than his seven-pounders. Guns were not ju-ju; but whizzing war-rockets, soaring sky-high and breaking into a terrifying cascade of flame, were regarded with awe and dismay.

The massacre of the mission took place on January 4, but the news did not reach Simon's Town until the 10th, and on the 15th Rawson received orders from the Admiralty to proceed against the King of Benin, in the following telegram: "An expedition against the King of Benin City under your command will be organized as a naval expedition. Two hundred and fifty Niger Coast Protectorate troops will co-operate. Report fully any requirements, and satisfy yourself as to the sufficiency of the force you propose to land." The War Office had previously been asked to furnish an estimate as to the cost and time required for the proposed expedition if organized as a military force, and the Admiral was also wired to and his opinion asked for. He replied: "Fifty thousand pounds and six weeks." As a matter of fact, the Benin Expedition cost thirty thousand pounds, and was over in four weeks.

To understand the state of affairs when the

Admiral received this telegram, it is necessary to consider the geographical position of some of the ships which were to take part. The "St. George" was at Simon's Town; the "Theseus" and "Forte" at Malta, eight thousand miles away; the "Alecto" up the Gambia, out of telegraphic communication; and the "Malacca," a hired transport, promised from England.

The projected expedition being one through dense jungle, in an unhealthy climate, where the only means of transport was by native carriers, required an enormous amount of organization and forethought. The handy-men had to be their own contractors, all provisions, water, baggage, and ammunition having to be weighed and packed, and even the cases made, by the very men who were going to march and fight.

Whilst the Admiral and his staff were busy settling the plan of campaign at Simon's Town, matters were being pushed forward at home. The P. and O. ship "Malacca," which was actually leaving the Thames with a cargo at the time, was overtaken and recalled, and her cargo discharged.

Within five days she was fitted as a hospital and store-ship, and equipped with ice-rooms and every appliance and device which medical and surgical science could suggest.

At the seat of war itself preparations were rapidly assuming shape. The native troops—

Haussas—were assembled at Warrigi, and a contingent of fifty scouts was raised at Lagos. Surveys of the country and collection of intelligence were made, and all the threads were woven ready to be joined together with the least delay, as the various parts of the expedition assembled at Forcados. The reason for the selection of Forcados as a base was that at this place there was a moderately deep bar, which ships drawing twenty feet of water could cross; whilst at the entrance to the Benin River, which was nearer to Benin, there was a shallow bar, impracticable for any but light-draught vessels.

The days succeeding the receipt of the Admiralty's telegram were probably the busiest that Rawson ever had in his life. An estimate of the stores which the "Malacca" should bring had to be telegraphed home, extra stores drawn from the dock-yard at Simon's Town, and arrangements made for others *en route*. A very large number of carriers had to be provided, the plan of attack drawn up, and many other matters taken into consideration.

On January 20 the Admiral left in the flagship for Brass, the nearest telegraph station to Forcados, and during the passage thither all hands were busily employed in preparing for the provisioning, housing, watering, and health of the expedition.

Nothing was known of the fighting qualities of the Benin people—whether they were a combative race, what numbers they could put into the field, or what their mode of warfare might be; so the

Admiral decided to organize as large a force as could be landed from the ships under his command—in all, one thousand strong.

Accordingly the expedition was divided into two divisions of seamen, each two hundred and twenty strong, a detachment of one hundred and twenty marines, and a guard for the carrier column, consisting of a company of seventy seamen, to act as escort. In addition, the headquarters staff numbered fifty, which, together with the two hundred and fifty native troops and seventy scouts, etc., brought the actual total of the whole force up to one thousand, all under the command of the Admiral, with Captain G. le C. Egerton, R.N., as Chief of Staff.

From January 20 until January 30, during which time the "St. George" was on her way from Simon's Town to Brass, final preparations were rapidly made and completed. Orders were drawn up for the detailed regulation of the expedition, small-arm companies exercised and drilled, provisions weighed and packed in loads, not exceeding fifty-six pounds in weight, for one thousand men for ten days; kerosene tins fitted and cleaned for carrying drinking-water; oil-drums prepared for boiling water; canvas lean-tos for the whole force made and painted; shot and shell packed in half-hundredweight loads; armoured plates fitted to launches and boats; hammocks and field-hospital prepared; and last, but not least, all boots overhauled and repaired.

The system for feeding one thousand men cut off from all supplies for ten days was interesting, and is here given :

Provisions for twenty-four men for one day were packed in a tin-lined box, and weighed fifty-six pounds ; since, as everything had to be transported by carriers, no individual load could exceed fifty-six pounds in weight. Companies were organized in multiples of twelve, so that in some cases boxes would last for two days. Thus, with sixty men in a company, they would on the first day be given three boxes, equal to rations for seventy-two men, leaving twelve rations over. Accordingly next day those men would receive two boxes, equal to forty-eight rations, which, together with the twelve remaining, made up the total of sixty rations required.

The plan of attack which Rawson decided on was as follows : Whilst the main body, enumerated above, would itself march on Benin, a division drawn from the ships " Philomel," " Widgeon," and " Barrosa," under the command of Captain M. P. O'Callaghan, R.N., was to proceed up the Gwato Creek to Gwato, sack and burn that town, cut off any fugitives who might attempt to escape westwards from the Benin country, and keep the Gwato army employed. Similarly, a division drawn from the ships " Alecto " and " Phœbe " was to proceed up the Jamieson River to Sapobar, and create a like diversion on the eastern side.

On February 9, all the ships having arrived at the

base off Forcados bar, the disembarkation of the force was commenced. The Gwato division, which had already proceeded to Warrigi, set off from thence for Gwato, and on the following day the Sapobar division, under Captain McGill, R.N., also left Warrigi and arrived at Sapobar.

Meanwhile the advance-guard of Haussas, under Colonel Hamilton, which was attached to the main body, was hard at work cutting down the jungle and clearing the road from Warrigi to Ceri, whilst Commander Bacon, Intelligence Officer, was employed in surveying the country, gathering information, and forwarding it on to the Admiral.

The time of disembarkation had been arranged so that, after the day of landing, a continual advance as far as possible was made daily, and any undue delay avoided.

On February 10 the river steamers which were to convey the main body from inside Forcados bar to Warrigi set off on their journey upstream. After entering Forcados River, a sharp turn was made to the left, and almost at once the party found themselves in a series of narrow creeks, with nothing but mangrove-trees on either side, their branched roofs and long weepers giving them a most uncanny appearance. For four or five hours these incessant lanes of mangrove-trees were passed, until at last they emerged into the Benin River. Close to the left lay the entrance to Gwato Creek, the route taken by the ill-fated mission. Two hours later Warrigi

was reached, and here signs of activity were apparent: provisions were being landed, a pier built, and large spaces cleared in the bush for the erection of storehouses.

On the morning of the 11th the Admiral and staff, with the 1st and 2nd Divisions of seamen, landed and marched seven miles to Ceri.

The heat was very great, portions of the road being quite unsheltered from the sun; but the general health of the bluejackets was excellent, and all appeared to be in great spirits at the prospect of a brush with the enemy. It was known that a certain number of the enemy were holding Ologbo, but their strength was not known. It was expected that the main army would be on the Gwato road or at Benin, although it was certain that the camp at Ceri would not escape the attention of the enemy, who would be sure to make a good stand there, in deference to their "water ju-ju."

Early on the morning of February 12 the main advance began from Ceri. The advance-guard of Haussas, under Colonel Hamilton, were embarked in launches and boats to cross the creek and make the first landing at Ologbo. The stream from Ceri to Ologbo is but one hundred feet broad, and winds considerably, with dense bush on both sides extending down to the water's edge. Two sharp turns in the river were negotiable only by running the boats into the bank, and then bringing the stream, which ran about two knots, on the bow, to fall off into mid-

stream again. At last the party landed by wading ashore, and a searching volley from the Maxim soon disclosed the enemy in the bush, who promptly returned the fire, never venturing into the open, but keeping under cover. The attack appearing to increase in severity, and reinforcements having arrived, orders were issued for an advance up the path in the direction of Ologbo village in order to flank the attack. This was done, the men marching slowly, and firing volleys at the word of command right and left, halting about half a mile up the path. The effect on the enemy was magical, for they almost immediately gave up the attack, and, retreating, left the camp at Ologbo undisturbed.

Throughout the whole expedition this dislike to being behind the advance was most marked in the Beni. Very rarely, and then only by isolated individuals, was an attack made anywhere but on the leading company of the column.

Meanwhile the transport of the main body across the stream proceeded slowly. Owing to the unfavourable nature of the banks on either side, the project of bridging the river, for which purpose Commander Bacon had made a suspension bridge in eight hours, was abandoned definitely, and all the available boats for the passage of the main body were worked to and fro by bluejackets during the night. Finally, the whole of the expedition was landed at the camp on Ologbo beach, which was designed to become a large dépôt. Shelters had to

be built for the men, covered with green leaves to protect them from the sun and dew ; boilers were set up for boiling the river-water before drinking ; the bush fringing the camp had to be cleared and storehouses erected. The carriers were assigned a separate camp, defended by the main one, necessitated by their constant chattering all through the night.

That evening news was received from Captain McGill at Sapobar of the death of Lieutenant Pritchard and a seaman, whilst Captain O'Callaghan reported the burning and capture of Gwato. Both commanders reported determined resistance from the enemy. The news was serious, for resistance was being met with at all three points of attack, and although a large force was expected to oppose the Gwato column, Sapobar, so far distant from Benin, and in what might be considered a not altogether unfriendly country, was a district where decided opposition was not looked for. This news, coupled with the warm reception the main body had at Ologbo, decided the Admiral to at once order up reinforcements from the ships at Forcados. Matters were far too serious to admit of doubting for a moment the courage of the enemy, or their skill as bushmen. Not only was it imperative to occupy and keep Gwato to prevent the withdrawal of the enemy from thence to assist Benin, but it was equally important that the country around Sapobar should be shown that the white men were in earnest,

and prevent the more or less friendly people from throwing in their lot with the Beni. To effect these two purposes the Gwato force required immediate help, whilst not a man could be spared from Sapobar, as intended, to increase the main column. The 1st Division, which had been detailed for the task of fighting its way to Benin, was none too large for the work, and additional men would be required to hold fortified bases along the road and to keep up communication. Accordingly Captain Foote, R.N., was called up to take charge of the 2nd Division in place of Captain McGill, who was required at Sapobar, and reinforcements were ordered up from the ships at Forcados to land at Warrigi, and on their way there a landing-party belonging to the "St. George" was detached at the Gwato Creek as reinforcements for the Gwato division, whilst the remainder continued their journey to Warrigi.

During February 13 the rest of the scouts, Haussas, 1st Division, and marine company, crossed from Ceri to Ologbo beach, and the 2nd Division began to cross during the night.

Early on the morning of the 14th the advance-guard left Ologbo and pushed on in the direction of Benin until 10 a.m., when scouts reported the enemy ahead in force. A running fight ensued, the column firing sectional volleys and then advancing, the enemy yelling and firing, then retiring, and again advancing with a yell. This running fight continued for an hour and a half until 11.30 a.m.,

when the advance-guard came to a clearing, which proved to be the enemy's camp, at Cross Roads. Sentries were posted, and the bush cut to still further clear the camp, which was evidently a large one. Attempts were made to find water here, but without success, and the fact was duly reported to the Admiral at Ologbo. Thirty-five tins were sent up for the use of the advance-guard, who now had enough to last until the following evening. On account of this reported absence of water a general order was issued, cutting down the daily allowance for every officer and man to two quarts per head for all purposes, after leaving Ologbo. More detailed information having been obtained regarding the route to Benin, a schedule of movements was drawn up and issued to all concerned, which it will be convenient to reproduce here :

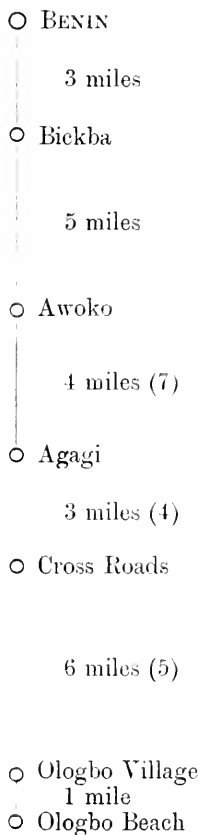
| Unit. | Present Position. | Movements ordered. | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | February 15. | February 16. | February 17. |
| Advance-Guard | Cross Roads | Agagi (3 miles) | Awoko (4 miles) | Bickba (5 miles) |
| "A" Co., 1st Division | Ologbo Village | Cross Roads (6 miles) | Awoko (7 miles) | Bickba (5 miles) |
| Marine Com- pany | Ologbo Beach | Cross Roads (7 miles) | Awoko (7 miles) | Bickba (5 miles) |
| Staff | Ologbo Beach | Cross Roads (7 miles) | Awoko (7 miles) | Bickba (5 miles) |
| "A" Co., 2nd Division | Ologbo Beach | Ologbo Beach | Agagi (10 miles) | Bickba (9 miles) |
| "B" Co., 1st Division | Ologbo Village | Ologbo Village | Cross Roads (6 miles) | Agagi (3 miles) |
| "B" Co., 2nd Division | Ologbo Beach | Ologbo Beach | Cross Roads (7 miles) | Awoko (7 miles) |
| Carrier Column | Crossing creek to Ologbo Beach | Ologbo Beach | Ologbo Beach | Cross Roads (7 miles) |

A study of the above table will show that the scheme provided for the concentration at Bickba, three miles from Benin, by the night of February 17 of the whole force, excepting the "B" Company of the 1st Division, and "B" Company of the 2nd Division at Awoko and Agagi respectively, who were told off to guard the line of communication with Cross Roads, the remainder of the route being patrolled by landing-parties from the "Theseus" and "Forte." Allowing for the two "B" Companies and the carrier column distributed in the rear of Bickba, about eight hundred men, including the Haussas, would be concentrated at this place by the evening of the 17th for the final advance on Benin. So far all had gone well. General arrangements were well in hand, no insuperable obstacles had yet been encountered, the men were well and in good spirits, and with the splendid organization success seemed to be in sight. On the evening of the 15th the force moved in accordance with their orders to the positions shown on the foregoing table, the distances of the respective halting-places from Benin being given on the opposite page.

At 1.30 on the morning of the 16th news was received by the Admiral from Colonel Hamilton, who was then in Agagi, that no water had been found there. On the contrary, there were indications that the natives had been in the habit of storing it, which showed that no local supply was available. Carriers were fainting, and it was abso-

PLAN SHOWING DISTANCES TO BENIN

ISSUED WITH ORDERS OF FEBRUARY 14, 1897

*Distances given are as believed before starting.**Distances given in brackets are as estimated after marching to Benin.*

lutely necessary to supply them with a quart a day. There were three large wells at Agagi, but they were completely dried up, and though, the bottom seeming soft, digging was tried, the deceptive layer of mud proved to be only sediment, below which was the hard rock. Thus the question of water for the expedition became most serious. Wells there were, but no water, and the admiral was face to face with the fact that he had not sufficient carriers in the expedition to carry water for the fighting divisions and for themselves to Benin. With care there was sufficient water for one day more, allowing the carriers a little, and that was all. Consequently, there remained but two courses open to him: either to delay the whole expedition for at least a fortnight by forming water dépôts at Cross Roads and Agagi sufficient to supply both divisions, or else turn the majority of the 2nd Division carriers into water-bearers for the 1st Division, and advancing rapidly, take Benin with one division only. The latter, though bold, seemed the most feasible course. The least quantity of water which could be issued to the white men and Haussas was two quarts, and the carriers one quart, per diem. Thus, to carry water for seven hundred seamen and Haussas and eight hundred carriers for three days, four hundred and forty carriers would be required for this purpose alone.

The admiral immediately decided on the latter of the two courses above mentioned—namely, that of

cutting down the force and advancing on Benin with a reduced flying column. Captain Egerton set to work at once under the admiral's directions. Orders were issued, and at 4.30 the revised column was ready to start from Cross Roads.

It was a marvel of energy, patience, and foresight, and Rawson generously acknowledged his debt to Captain Egerton in the official despatch which he sent home after the expedition was over : "It is not too much to say that the whole success of the expedition has resulted from the work he has done."

Every man not absolutely necessary in the firing-line was left behind, and all superfluous baggage. No officer was allowed more than one carrier, all the extra food and sundries of the admiral's and officers' messes were left behind, and all, from the admiral downwards, limited to two quarts of water per diem, including washing and cooking water. Five days' rations and three days' water were taken. It was a stringent reduction, but a necessary one, and an excellent example of the efficiency of each department which enabled it to be done, and the column ready to start in three hours.

The 2nd Division was given the task of erecting tanks at Cross Roads, guarding the line of communication, and collecting stores at Agagi and Awoko. Water-tanks are not the easiest things to improvise, but seamen's bags, which were used to carry their

kit, answered well, and the painted lean-to canvas shelters for the men, now discarded with the reduction of baggage, sunk in the earth, made excellent tanks. All the water had to come from Ologbo beach and be boiled, so there was plenty to occupy the time of those left behind. Henceforth Cross Roads camp was to become the main advanced store of food and water.

On the evening of the 16th the whole flying column were concentrated at Agagi and received orders to advance to Awoko at 5.30 the next morning. As this column was the one engaged in the capture of Benin, its strength and organization are here given in detail :

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Headquarters and Medical Staff | ... | ... | 30 |
| Scouts | ... | ... | 40 |
| Haussas (N.C.P. force) | ... | ... | 240 |
| Two companies of seamen | ... | ... | 120 |
| Two companies of marines | ... | ... | 120 |
| Rocket and demolition party | ... | ... | 10 |
| Total | | | 560 |

The seamen companies were commanded by Lieutenants Fyler and Llewellyn Griffiths, and were drawn from the "Theseus" and "St. George." The marines were commanded by Captains Beaumont and Byrne, R.M.L.I. With the Haussas were two seven-pounder guns and a Maxim, and there were four Maxims with the remainder of the column. The force was organized in an advance-guard under Lieutenant-Colonel B. Hamilton, a rear-guard under

Captain C. Campbell, R.N., and a main body under the immediate command of the admiral. The column, five hundred and sixty strong, was accompanied by eight hundred and twenty carriers, of whom two hundred and ninety were for water transport alone. Along the line of communication this force was supported by seamen and marines, about eighty in all, stationed at Cross Roads, whilst at Ologbo village were the remainder of the seamen and marines, about two hundred and twenty, and, farther to the rear, reinforcements of about one hundred and forty from the ships.

At 6.30 on the morning of the 17th, a start was made for Awoko, the enemy not showing quite so much fight. It had been expected that the Gwato army might be recalled to contest the last two stages of the march on Benin, but the numbers were not great, and probably the majority had retreated towards the city. Pushing on, the force came in contact with the enemy, who were easily driven back, and shortly before 3 p.m. the village of Awoko was discovered about two hundred yards to the right of the path, and here the column halted. They were now in actual contact with the enemy, and eleven miles from the nearest support. With so watchful an enemy, and being so near Benin, extra precautions had to be taken, and the bush all round the camp cleared to a greater extent than usual. Water was now treated like gold, every drop being carefully measured before issuing

it to the men. Rawson had certainly burned his boats with a vengeance.

Benin lay before him with unknown opposition, its actual whereabouts being shrouded in mystery, whilst but two days' water remained. If he missed Benin, and did not find it next day, or if any delay occurred, matters would indeed become serious. But here the clear judgment and unflinching determination of the man came to the front. It was essential that Benin should fall next day, whatever happened. Nothing could be gained without risk, and this risk had to be run, or the whole expedition fatally delayed. For men to fight, march, and work—not only hard, but at times their hardest—they want water. At the time it is all right, and excitement carries them through; but when the thirst returns with the reaction, it is easy to see that the game cannot last. The orders issued for the night were: In case of alarm the headquarters bugler would sound the assembly, and no other bugler was to sound. A picket of marines was placed on the main road, with instructions to fire volleys at the enemy, if seen. If sentries guarding the other parts of the camp saw the enemy, they were not to fire; but if fired at, they were to call their picket, and the shots were to be returned by single volleys. On no account were Maxims to be used.

At 9 p.m. the admiral provided a little ju-ju entertainment in the shape of four signal rockets,

just to give the enemy something to think about. He who saw the blue, red, and green stars dropping from the heavens at the will of the white man had plenty of food for reflection. At all events the column were not troubled that night, but fell asleep, possibly to dream of what marvels that wondrous city they had come so many thousand miles to see would disclose to them on the morrow.

CHAPTER VIII

Order of march—Capture of Mogwane—Nearing Benin—Final attack—Flight of enemy—Benin captured—King's escape—Description of Benin City—Arts and crafts of the Beni.

NEXT morning the column was up and away by 6.30, the Haussas and "St. George's" company of seamen leading. The order of march was as follows :

Half-company Haussas.
Maxim gun.
Rocket tube.
Half-company Haussas.
Company of seamen.
Maxim gun.
Demolition party.
Rocket tube.
Two Haussa seven-pounder guns.
Half marine detachment.
Two Maxim guns.
Headquarters staff.
Half marine detachment.
Baggage of above force, in same order.
Water-supply, guarded by marines.
Remainder of baggage.
Maxim.
Company of seamen.

The whole force carried full water-bottles and a quarter of a pound of biscuit, while the men ahead of the baggage party were accompanied only by their water, ammunition, and stretcher parties.

Almost immediately after starting, the advance-guard was fired on, and at the same time, as the rear-guard was leaving the camp, one of the enemy incautiously showed himself, and was immediately killed. The attack on the advance-guard continued on and off till 10.30 a.m., when a determined stand was made by the enemy, and a chief torpedo-instructor, Ansell by name, was shot dead. The rear-guard buried him close to the path, writing his name on a tree near his head, and covering the grave with dead leaves.

It was a trying time for the Admiral, to be in the middle of the column in single file and hear firing ahead, perhaps volley after volley, and not be able to see what was going on. A system of messengers was therefore introduced to carry notes from the head of the column to him, and it answered very well.

The collection of these notes at the end of the day, with times attached, gave a very good account of the day's work. At noon a village called Mogwane was reached, which was reported to be close to Benin. The village was captured and the stockade blown up, and rockets and seven-pounders were fired in the direction of Benin, after which the advance was continued. Soon the column came upon the first evidence that it was approaching the city, in the shape of a human sacrifice. Laid on the grass where two paths met was a young woman horribly mutilated, the expression on her

face plainly telling of the agony of her murder. At her feet lay a goat with its knees broken, a ju-ju idea to prevent the approach of the white men. Farther on other corpses were found, affording a ghastly spectacle. Finally the column escaped from the narrow path into a broad avenue running at right angles to it, at the spot marked X on the plan.

Here a halt was called, a little water was served to the men, who needed it badly, and more rockets were fired towards the city (whose approximate direction only was known).

Little did the Admiral know the effects those rockets were going to have in Benin. It would hardly be credited that at a mile distant, and fired only in a general direction, they should have pitched into the ju-ju compounds. A Beni woman afterwards described what happened :

“The compound was thronged with people, when suddenly from the blue appeared two hissing thunderbolts, which fell into the very heart of the sacred precincts. Not a white man in sight ! Yet here were two messages from the skies. ‘Truly the white men are gods !’ they said, and ran panic-stricken from the place.”

On the first appearance of the column in the open some of the enemy, armed with guns, attempted a charge, cheering as they came, but were driven back into the bush by volleys and the Maxims.

From the position of the column, Benin lay out of

sight to the left; opposite was bush, from which puffs of smoke showed the presence of the enemy. The path led on to the right, and was clear of natives, though the bush on the left still sheltered the Beni, who kept up a desultory fire. Orders were now given for the baggage and force in rear of it to remain under cover in the bush, whilst a little water was brought and hurriedly served out, the heat being terrific.

The seamen were posted on the left flank and the marines on the right flank, with the Haussas in the centre. The seven-pounders were brought to bear on a house two hundred yards to the right front, where the enemy were congregating, and the whole force then advanced on Benin. The enemy occupied the bush on both sides, and were also up in the trees, Major Searle, of the Haussas, receiving a bullet through his helmet, which entered from above. The Maxim played on the men ahead, but as it had unfortunately lost its fore-sight in the bush, the range was difficult to get, and more of the enemy got away than otherwise would have been the case. Many of the officers and men were hit during the march up the avenue, and finally, the advance having been sounded, the troops charged up by half-companies, cheering as they went. The heat was terrific, without a breath of air, and the entire force was exhausted, having been on the march for seven hours without food. The whole way had been contested by the enemy, and it had been impossible to halt for more

than a few minutes at a time. Soon, about five hundred yards in front, appeared an embankment, in the centre of which was a pole with two unfortunate slaves tied up to it. A few minutes later a gun loaded with slugs was discharged in face of the advancing force, wounding several. The men charged before it could be reloaded, and found several old guns on the ground, all loaded.

A couple of hundred yards farther on, to the left, began a long high wall and roof. This proved to be the King's compound, which was entered and secured. The whole place was unoccupied, as were the compounds behind it. The enemy had all gone, bolted, rather prematurely it seemed, since a further acquaintance with what proved to be the King's compound showed that had they held it, they might have given the force a bad time of it. But the rockets had done their work, and the sentries being posted, a halt was called, all being thoroughly done up.

The object of the expedition was attained, although the King had escaped, and was not to be captured for many months afterwards. But the victory had been dearly bought: one officer was killed (Surgeon Fyffe) and two severely wounded, whilst three men had been killed and twenty-four wounded.

Benin was now in our hands, and held by a force of five hundred and fifty men, with about eight hundred and twenty carriers. The nearest reinforcements were at Agagi, which, by subsequent

measurements, was shown to be fifteen miles from Benin, instead of twelve as hitherto supposed. No water had been found, and in reserve was only a quart per man. The heat was terrible in the place, the sights ghastly, and the odour awful. Human sacrifices and corpses were strewn in all directions. In the King's compound were the ju-ju temples, palaver house, King's house, and many buildings for the accommodation of the King's retainers and the ju-ju priests. It was in these ju-ju compounds that the principal sacrifices were carried out, the compounds themselves being about a hundred and fifty yards long, and about sixty broad, surrounded by a high wall, and covered with a short brown grass. At one end was a long shed running the whole breadth of the enclosure, and under this was the altar. This was formed of three steps reaching from end to end of the shed, slightly raised for some distance in the centre, on which raised portion were placed handsomely carved ivory tusks mounted on the tops of very antique bronze heads. Near these were carved clubs, undoubtedly for use upon the victims of the sacrifice. The altar was deluged with human blood, the smell of which was quite overpowering. This same awful smell seemed to pervade the whole compound, as if the grass had been watered with blood. In the centre of the altar was an iron erection, like a huge candelabra, with sharp hooks. Its purpose was not known at the time, but it is probable that it was some

instrument of torture, or for hanging portions of the victims on. In most of the ju-ju compounds were wells or pits for the reception of the bodies.

But perhaps the one lasting remembrance of the "city of blood," to those who took part in its capture, was its smells. Crucifixions, human sacrifices, and other horrors the eye could get accustomed to, but the stench was quite insupportable. Everyone who was able seemed to have indulged in a human sacrifice, and where this was not done, some animal had been offered up, and the remains left in front of the house. Blood was everywhere; smeared over bronzes, ivory, and even the walls, and spoke the history of that awful city clearer than words could ever do. And this had been going on for centuries! Not the lust of one King, not the climax of a bloody reign, but the religion of the race. Such atrocities, originating in blood-lust and desire to terrorize the neighbouring States, the brutal love of mutilation and torture, and the wholesale manner in which the caprices of the King and the ju-ju priests were satisfied, could only have been the result of centuries of brutality. Facing the King's compound was a crucifixion tree with a double crucifixion, the two poor wretches stretched out facing the west, with their arms bound. The construction of this erection was peculiar, being built absolutely for the purpose of crucifixion. At the base, skulls and bones were literally strewn about, the débris of

former horrors. Down the avenue to the right was a tree with nineteen skulls, the result of more recent sacrifices, while down every main road were two or more human ju-ju offerings.

It is unnecessary to continue describing the horrors of the place; everywhere death, barbarity, and blood, and smells that it seemed impossible for human beings to endure.

And yet the town was not without its beauty, of a sort. Plenty of green trees and vegetation abounded, whilst the houses were built in no set fashion, but each compound surrounded by its own bushes and shady avenues. It seemed a place suggestive of peace and plenty, not a city of blood.

The storehouses contained chiefly cheap rubbish, such as glass trinkets and the usual tawdry finery which traders use to tickle the fancy of the natives. But buried in the dirt of ages lay several hundred unique bronze plaques, suggestive of almost Egyptian design and of really superb casting. Castings of wonderful delicacy of detail, and some magnificently carved tusks were collected; but in most cases the ivory was dead from age, very few of modern date being seen, and those mostly uncarved. Of silver and gold there was none, with the exception of the hilt of one sword of state which was inlaid with gold, and one small gold trinket; and the coral was of poor quality. In fact, the only things of value were the tusks and bronze work. In one well forty-nine tusks were found. Of other ivory work,

some bracelets suggestive of Chinese work and two magnificent carved leopards were the chief articles of note, whilst bronze groups of idols and two large and beautifully worked stools were also found, evidently of ancient manufacture. Referring to the ivory and bronze work found in Benin, Mr. H. Ling Roth, in a very valuable treatise on the subject writes : " At the time of the destruction of the city of Great Benin we seemed to know little about the city or the country, but its capture caused us to seek out what had once been known and long since forgotten. Our ignorance was due partly to the fact that Benin was, from the time of the first discovery, a decaying city off the great high roads of European commerce, and partly to the obstacles placed by the natives in the way of Europeans getting there, a difficulty in which the unhealthy nature of the country came to their aid. . . . Whether such obstacles were due to the fear of the denunciation of human sacrifices and all their attendant horrors, or whether the ruling chiefs rightly feared that once a European got a footing he would soon become master of the country, matters little now ; but if a city ever deserved its fate, that city was Benin."

Referring to the art of carving in ivory and wood, Mr. Ling Roth states that it had attained a fairly high state of progress. " Among the large variety of curiously carved objects discovered by the expedition, not the least curious are the huge carved tusks,

of which large numbers were brought home when the punitive expedition had done its work. Most of the tusks found *in situ* were covered with a thick coating of congealed human and animal blood ; other tusks were found buried, some of them in a very decayed condition. The tusks vary in length up to six feet and over, and are in themselves magnificent specimens, speaking eloquently of the pacific life elephants must have led in former times to have enabled them to live long enough to produce such splendid ivory. The ornamentation to which the large tusks have been subjected, while preserving their form, is of two grades : the one severely plain, and the other extremely decorative in its effect. The former consists of a series of three to five incised bands of plait pattern, a design very common in West Africa, placed at intervals, the bands diminishing in width as they approach the tip of the tusk. The embellishment is consequently plain, but elegant, and does not call for further remark.

“The other grade consists in covering the whole tusk with a succession of boldly carved, grotesque figures—human, animal, and symbolic—giving the tusks a rich, embroidered-like look. The background appears to be cut out to a uniform depth, and in spite of the multiplicity of figures, there is neither overcrowding nor overloading. The *motif*, if such it can be called, of the ornamentation would appear to be partly emblematic of the Beni belief,



TROPHIES FROM BENIN.

and partly representative of the court ceremonial. . . . The whole arrangement is carefully carried out, notwithstanding the crudeness and ruggedness of the carving ; and although it can hardly be called a design, where there is such a want of cohesion in its components, the general effect is exceedingly good, and is certainly heightened by being finished off with a suitable diamond-patterned belt, tastefully set at the bottom, which gives a decided finish to the whole work. Of the carved woodwork, a very large amount was lost in the conflagration already alluded to, and that which has come under notice cannot be said to rank very high. . . . With the exception of one possible foliage pattern, which repeats itself with variations, and the representation of the palm and its supposed offshoot, the rosette, which appears in the metal-work, there is a total absence of any attempt to delineate the flora of the country ; hence the development towards conventionalism can only be looked for in the representation of zoological forms. We must, however, remember that there are considerable foreign elements in Beni decorative art which will account for many contradictions. Part of these elements consist of European forms, which the native mind, so prone to copy, has not failed to hand down to us, and part, if not the actual foundation of the art, has been introduced from other portions of Africa. Speaking generally, the art of ivory and wood carving in the Benin country may be said to be characterized by boldness, freedom,

clearness in execution, originality—due, perhaps, as much to a grotesque mixture of subjects as to the methods in which they are handled—variety, a want of fantasy, and, except in a few special cases, by primitive designs. It limits itself to the delineation of isolated portions of religious or court ceremonial, historical events, and individual peculiarities of human, animal, or artificial form; and hence it belongs to that early period so aptly described by Henry Balfour as the ‘age of realistic representation.’

“As to the method followed in the carving, we have no records, but Mr. C. Punch, who saw some tusks half completed, says no tracing or drawing was applied first; the carver made his design as he went on, using no model, and the only instruments he saw used were jack-knives and hammers. . . . When an elephant was killed, the King claimed one tusk and the other went to the hunter; but the King had the option of buying it if he wished to do so.

“The use of coral, or what passed for such, and beads, seem to have been extremely popular in the Benin country. One of the King’s robes consisted of masses of strings of coral, interspersed with larger pieces, supposed to be worth many pounds. His head-dress, which was in the shape of a Leghorn straw hat, was composed wholly of coral of excellent quality, meshed closely together, and must have weighed very heavily on his head, for it was often

temporarily removed by an attendant. His wrists and ankles were closely covered with coral bangles, and his chest was completely hidden from view by the coral breastplate which encircled his neck."

With regard to the bronze castings, Mr. Ling Roth remarks that "these productions of the metal-worker's art will hold their own among some of the best specimens of antiquity or modern times. Neither traveller, ethnologist, nor antiquary dreamt of the wealth of metal-work, rich in quantity and quality as well as in variety, which have been brought to light. It is difficult to explain what could have made their bronze castings unique, for there is absolutely nothing like them in any part of the world. . . . Commerce and the intercourse it breeds is no doubt responsible for the large variety of forms in the art of the Beni, but it is hardly sufficient to account for the exceptional bronze plaques. It seems as though the only conclusion we can arrive at is that we have in them a form of real native art. This opinion is strengthened by the fact that we can trace to some extent in them decadence and progress, and in the general carving and ornamentations we can see very clearly the process of the evolution of new forms out of the primitive realistic representation. At the present day the method of casting the bronze and brass is in use by the Haussas, and possibly might not be indigenous; but the style is distinctly African, with numerous inroads of that of other peoples, and

especially is such the case after the advent of the Portuguese."

Among the many specimens of bronze and brass castings described and illustrated by Mr. Ling Roth is that of the head of a staff or wand of office, of which various specimens now exist in European collections. "The *motif* may be briefly said to be a leopard supporting a column on its back, a not uncommon *motif* in the art world, as, for instance, the lions and other animals supporting columns in Moorish and Assyrian architecture; it is also not uncommon in the Yoruba country, where a drum on top of a column is occasionally supported by the back of an animal.

"The upper portion of this staff-head consists of a band of engraved basket-work pattern, with grained open ground. This is followed by a band of fish-scale pattern, ornamented at the lower corners of contact by punched indents. On this band there are an upper and lower series of ornament in relief. The upper series consists of four faces, that on the front being probably a negro, with the tribal marks on the forehead, and that on the back being of a European, both faces being in full, and boldly and clearly executed, while the two faces on either side are of Europeans—flat, poorly executed, and in profile, with the mouth curiously twisted into full face. The lower series consists of a central European, full face, flanked by two conventionalized mud or cat fishes, whilst at the back we have a rosette.

. . . The European figures on either side of the leopard, in their flatness and general crudeness, are quite out of keeping with the rest of the work, and contrast unfavourably with the bold, life-like attitude of the animal. One is almost inclined to think that the same artist could not have modelled both the leopard and the two distorted human figures. . . . In depicting the leopard, the artist has indicated its spots by means of a series of indents punched in a circle, but on other examples of leopards from Benin the spots are indicated by flat rings in relief. Strangely enough, flat rings in relief are used by other Beni artists to represent the natives' woolly hair!

"One cannot help admiring the boldness with which this leopard has been modelled, and the firmness with which his claws grasp the ground, while the vigorous way in which the tail is made to support the bulk of the column should be remarked. Equally admirable are the suitable proportions into which the bands of ornament are divided. The uppermost band is kept well subdued, so that the faces of the next band are brought more prominently into relief, while the fish-scale pattern of the ground-work on to which the faces have been grafted affords scope for the artist to extend his design while still keeping the enchasing well suppressed.

"It may well be asked how these articles were produced, and whence did the people learn the art.

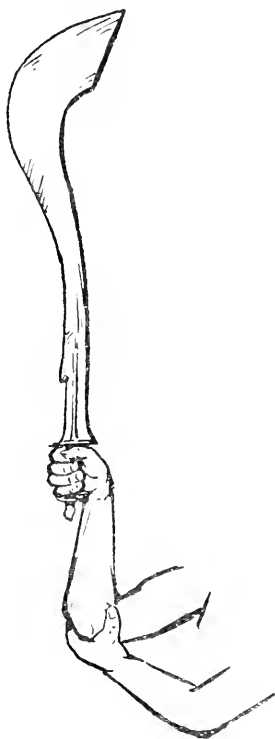
They were made by the *cire perdue* process—that is to say, in a core of hardened sand is moulded a wax model, which is then carefully coated with clay; the wax is melted out, and the molten metal is made to take its place. When cooled and the clay removed, the rough casting is the result. This is then generally finished by tooling, punching, etc. The articles are not always cast in one piece, and, wherever possible, skill is shown, in order to save metal or insure lightness, by making protuberances concave at the back.

“In the staff-head described, the hard, sandy core can still be scraped out, so that we have here a decided proof as to the process employed. The ancient Etruscans and Greeks made their castings solid without any sand core, while the Beni were evidently adepts in the superior method practised by the ancient Egyptians.

“Other examples of their metal work are seen in their weapons of war. These are frequently indicated on the carved ivory work and on the metal castings, those most prominent being the ‘*ebere*,’ or royal sceptre, and the ‘*ada*,’ the official sword or cutlass. The ‘*ebere*’ was always carried before the king at any state function, and was, in fact, the emblem of royalty. Curiously enough, the expedition found many facsimiles of the ‘*ebere*,’ quite new, formed of electro-plate. Though not exact copies of the original, they bear a striking resemblance, and were made by a firm in England

for some trader, who, no doubt, made a very handsome profit in ivory out of his venture.

“The ‘ada,’ or official sword, was not held by the king himself, but was carried in front of him by a naked youth. It was held in the right hand with



OFFICIAL SWORD.

the edge forward, with left hand supporting the right arm under the elbow. What the significance of the regulation posture was is not clear. The ‘ada’ was also used by the king’s executioners.”

When on the return of the members of the expedition it became known that fine specimens of bronze castings and ivory and wood carvings had been found in the city, Mr. Charles H. Read, the Keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum, endeavoured to secure good specimens for the national collection, and added some fine plaques; owing to lack of pecuniary support, he was unable to obtain possession of the more expensive and equally interesting articles. But General Pitt-Rivers, an enthusiastic and wealthy collector, purchased largely, and succeeded in making a very varied and interesting collection for his museum at Farnham, although the bulk of the bronzes and carvings were secured by the Germans, and housed in the museum at Stuttgart.

CHAPTER IX

Successful search for water—Demolition of city commenced—Alarm of fire—General conflagration—Loss of clothing and stores—Relief arrives—Return march commenced—Hardships *en route*—Messages from the Queen—Embarkation—Ravages of malarial fever—Serious illness—Farewell to Africa.

IN the last chapter we left the expedition just arrived in Benin, and digressed into a description of the town and the arts and crafts of the Beni. The admiral decided to remain that night camped where he was, and leave to the morning any further operations that might prove necessary to completely reduce the town, first of all obtaining a good supply of water, the principal consideration under the circumstances. The direction and distance of the water was known, but it was expected that the supply would be obstinately defended. That evening the admiral and staff moved into the main compound for the night, but were forced to sleep on the path to avoid the smell of blood on the grass.

Early next day a strong party was sent, under Captain Campbell, R.N., to bring in water, and subsequently returned, having found three miles away a fast-running stream seven or eight feet

deep, which eventually proved to be a continuation of the Ologi Creek. The general joy at finding this stream was great. For the admiral it meant the relief of all anxiety on this score; whilst the blue-jackets, marines, and carriers all revelled in the cool water. As, however, it was the first day of getting water, and nearly eight hundred tins had to be filled and boiled, little time was available for the men to wash, much to their disappointment; but on subsequent days they had a better opportunity, and water was once more liberally served out to all for cooking, drinking, and washing.

In the afternoon a party, accompanied by the admiral, went to burn Ojumo's compound, a village at the commencement of the Gwato road, which was soon accomplished and with considerable zest, after the horrors passed on the road. Here again were ju-ju houses smeared with blood; in fact, there was blood everywhere. All the crucifixion trees were destroyed, the berthing of the troops arranged for, a commissariat store for provisions found, and a water store for two days' supply made. Orders were sent to the base at Ologbo for four days' provisions to be brought up, and a lieutenant with a steam pinnace and two canoes was told off to endeavour to establish communication with Benin from Ologbo by water, in order to bring down the sick and wounded; but this attempt failed, the creek running in a general north-easterly direction away from Benin.

The news of the taking of Benin was sent to Captain O'Callaghan at Gwato, and he was told to hold that place until the 27th inst.; Captain McGill at Sapobar was ordered to return on the 24th inst.

On the next day, February 20, Ochudi's compound, the village belonging to the chief who guarded the Ologbo and Sapobar road, was burnt, and the demolition of other parts of the town was commenced. The Queen-Mother's house was destroyed, and Captain Foote, commanding the base at Ologbo, was informed that the landing-party would begin to leave Benin on the 22nd. A church parade under arms was ordered for the following evening (Sunday), and preparations begun for the departure of the force.

Next day the usual demolitions were proceeded with and a good deal of work done. The early part of the day was quite uneventful, and preparations were being made for the grand parade at four o'clock, when the colours were to be hoisted and three cheers given for the Queen.

Suddenly an alarm of fire was raised, and, sure enough, smoke could be seen about three hundred yards off. The admiral took in the situation at a glance; there was nothing to be done but save all that was possible, prevent panic, and let the fire burn itself out. A party under Captain Campbell at once rushed off to rescue the sick from the hospital, while others saved as many provision boxes

as possible. "Wildfire is the only word to describe the flames. The first uprush of heated air caused a miniature whirlwind, which fanned the flames and carried blazing brands from roof to roof. Soon everything was in a blaze, and the heat excessive, due to the volume of the flames caused by the dryness of the thatch. There was a dim grandeur about it all, and also there seemed to be a fate. Here was the head-centre of iniquity, given into British hands, with the brand of blood soaked into every corner and relic ; fire only could purge it, and here its legitimate fate had overtaken it, in retribution for the millions of lives that had been wilfully sacrificed."

The smoke from the smouldering roofs gradually cleared, and the whole place seemed healthier and fresher for its purging. A large quantity of provisions and water, and nearly all the personal effects of the officers and men, were lost in the fire, besides many interesting relics, and things looked bad for a short time. The return march was to be commenced on the morrow, and here was the force short of provisions, no clothing, some of the men having nothing but a flannel, boots, socks, and trousers left to them ; waterproof sheets and everything else destroyed, and four nights in the bush before them ; not a candle available to light up when the night set in.

But relief was at hand. The fire had scarcely died away when in marched a train of carriers with

provisions, under escort of a party of bluejackets from the "Forte." It seemed as if plenty had suddenly dropped from the sky to replace their losses. It appeared that these provisions had been sent to Agagi for use on the way back, but being short of water, the officer in command had pushed on to Benin, and welcome indeed he was.

Early the next day the men had their last meal in Benin, and at 8.30 a.m. the long line of sailors, marines, and carriers was formed and marched off, whilst the Haussas, who were to remain and pacify the country, cheered them on their way. They were, no doubt, glad enough to leave Benin, their work being accomplished, and the power of the King broken for ever. His fetish places were burned, his ju-ju broken; his house, the white man's residence; and the very palaver house was the assembly place, whence he could be dictated to as to terms of surrender and his future behaviour. The crucifixion trees had disappeared, and the whole place lay bare and wasted.

The march back from Benin to Warrigi was uneventful, but slow, on account of the wounded. The first night was spent at Awoko, and the next day the expedition camped at Cross Roads, where all possible arrangements had been made for their comfort. Here news was received that Lieutenant Mitchell, who had set off in a launch to find a waterway to Benin on the 19th, had not returned; but he subsequently arrived at Ologbo on February 24,

having found the creek to trend to the north-east away from Benin City.

On the same day the withdrawal of the force to Ologbo and Warrigi was continued, and at the latter place the following telegram was received from Queen Victoria and read to the force :

"February 19.—Please convey to Admiral Rawson and forces under his command my congratulations on their successful advance, though I deeply regret casualties. I shall anxiously await further news."

Meanwhile the force was re-embarking at Warrigi, the sick and wounded going by water from Ologbo to Warrigi, the remainder marching. The whole of the next two days was occupied in the embarkation of the men and stores, and finally, on February 28, the crews were back again on board their respective ships.

But their troubles were far from over, for malarial fever was bound to make its appearance, and no sooner were the crews of the ships embarked than the fever quickly appeared. The sick-list of five ships rose to nearly four hundred cases, and many weeks elapsed before the fever completely disappeared.

Rawson and his Chief of Staff, Egerton, were completely prostrated, and were confined to their beds for days ; and it was after this Benin march that the hip trouble which for years caused Rawson excruciating agony, appeared for the first time. He

bore it with manly fortitude, and only those who knew him intimately realized the pain he was constantly suffering.

On February 25 the whole force was cheered by the receipt of a second telegram from Her Majesty, in which "The Queen desires to express to Admiral Rawson her great admiration of the conduct of the brave men under his command, who must have all gone through such a terribly trying time on their march to Benin, which was so successfully captured. The Queen feels so much for them all, and is most anxious to hear that the wounded, and indeed all, are doing well, for the climate, the privations, and the horrors they witnessed must have been most fearful. The Queen deeply grieves for the loss of life."

So ended the last of the "little wars" in which Rawson was engaged whilst in command at the Cape. It was a difficult operation, and one requiring great mental concentration and a nature used to triumphing over apparently insuperable obstacles. Many difficulties were encountered. To sum them up, the supply of carriers from certain districts was delayed on account of an outbreak of small-pox, and cases of this disease interfered seriously with the transport during the advance. The country was found to be covered with dense bush, and inhabited by a numerous hostile and warlike people. Drinking-water was not found according to expectations on the line of march,

and the distance to be covered from the advanced base at Ologbo to Benin was found to be over twenty miles, instead of eight, as it had originally been supposed to be. In spite of these difficulties Benin was captured, after considerable opposition from the enemy, on February 18, exactly one month after Rawson, then at Simon's Town, had been ordered by the Admiralty to organize the expedition. The points of special interest brought out by this small war are numerous. It illustrates to a conspicuous degree the great differences in the relations between time and space in operations by water and on shore in a country of this nature. This is shown by comparing the speed with which the expedition was moved to Warrigi with the rate of their subsequent advance to Benin.

It shows the extent to which a squadron of cruisers can be relied upon to undertake operations on shore with their landing-parties at a considerable distance from the coast, and it shows the vital necessity of an effective water-supply on such a campaign.

In this case lack of water-supply caused the whole plan of operations to be hastily reconsidered and amended during a critical period of the advance, a change effected without the slightest hitch whatever in an incredibly short time.

It is worthy of note, as illustrating the weighty responsibility devolving upon the commander of the expedition, that after the capture of the city

the force had but a quart of water per man in reserve.

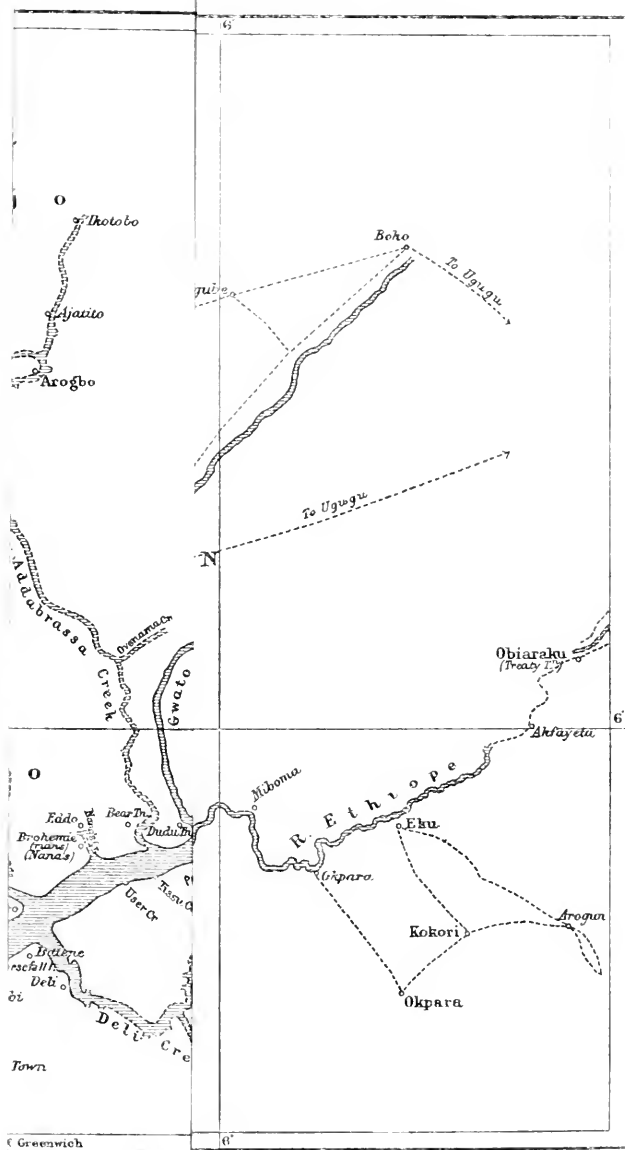
For his services on this occasion Rawson received the K.C.B. and the thanks of the Foreign Office, but his pleasure at receiving these new-found honours was more than counterbalanced by the permanent injury to his health resulting from the expedition. His determination to share the privations of his men cost him dear. For weeks afterwards he was prostrated, and he bore the marks of the Benin campaign to his grave.

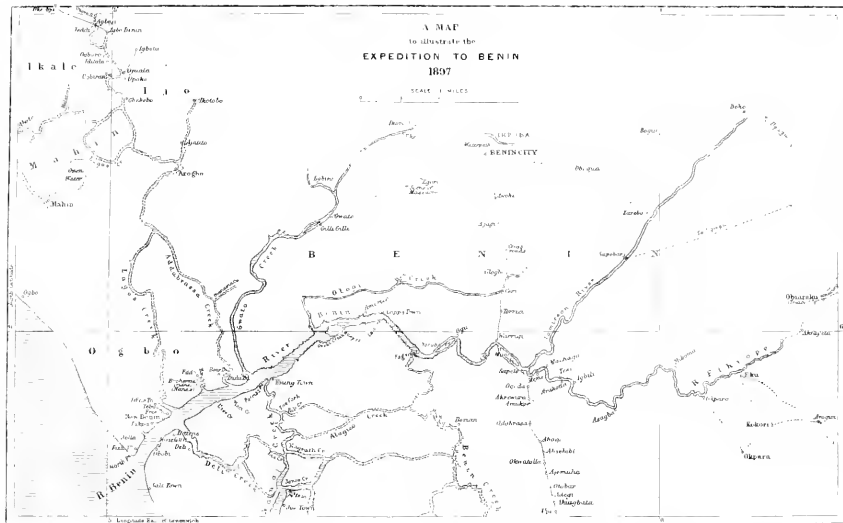
When the "St. George" returned home, in January, 1898, the officers and crew were entertained at a banquet given in their honour by the Mayor and Corporation of Portsmouth, a unique compliment to the Navy in general and to Sir Harry's late flagship in particular. But a still further honour fell to their lot when Queen Victoria invited them to Osborne, this being the first time in naval history when the honour of a personal reception was granted by the monarch to the officers and crew of a warship. Admiral Sir Michael Culme-Seymour presented the officers to Her Majesty, after which the sailors and marines walked past the Queen's chair, each man saluting as he passed, Her Majesty evincing the deepest interest in the appearance and welfare of the men.

The record of the "St. George" thoroughly justified the honour conferred upon those who had served in her, and illustrated in a singularly com-

plete manner the cares and responsibilities of Empire. During the flagship's four years' commission, England had uninterruptedly enjoyed the blessings of international peace, and yet the "St. George" had known little respite from active service. Under Sir Harry's predecessor, Admiral Bedford, she was called upon to take part in the Brass River Expedition; twice she paid a visit to Zanzibar, once to suppress M'barak's rebellion, and the second time to crush the aspirations of a pretender to the throne. But for the necessity of maintaining our naval strength at the Cape during the ferment which followed the Jameson Raid, the "St. George" would have co-operated with the Ashanti Expedition, and was indeed at Cape Coast Castle when she was recalled. Finally came the crowning triumph of Benin to set the seal on as brilliant a series of "little wars" as ever ship was engaged in. Other adventures of a less romantic nature were recorded in the log of the "St. George" during her commission, but those cited above are sufficient to prove that even in what are nominally the "piping times of peace" the duties of the British bluejacket are arduous, and dangers to life and limb—beyond those inherent in the calling of men who go down to the sea in ships—are daily confronting him.

More chances of distinction probably fell to the lot of the "St. George" than to the majority of ships, but can one doubt that the same spirit which





animated her officers and men, inspired then and inspires now the crews of all other ships which fly the white ensign ?

The remainder of Sir Harry's time at the Cape was more or less peaceful. Although he and his men were ever ready to join in the fray, no further trouble arose to keep them employed. Of a truth their last exploit had tried the men sorely. At one time nearly four hundred officers and men were down with fever, and it became necessary to convert the Drill Hall at Simon's Town into a temporary hospital. Many months elapsed before the sick-list was finally clear, and all traces of the ravages of malarial fever removed.

The admiral himself suffered terribly, and, indeed, for many days lay dangerously ill. Arthritis developed in his hip-bone and caused him agonizing torture to the end of his days. Frequent entries in his diary record the pain which this caused him, and there is another which throws a sidelight on the love his men bore him. "Every day a Warrant Officer from each of the ships comes to the house to inquire how I am getting on." There is little room for wonderment when we read, during the advance on Benin : "The Admiral doffed his uniform immediately on landing, and, attired only in trousers and shirt and a big helmet, walked every step of the journey, plodding along with the aid of a walking-staff, although he was nearly fifty-five years old.

His grand example kept the men well together, and although at times he could hardly put one foot before the other, so great was his fatigue, he gallantly refused the services of carriers. His treatment of the force was most kind and considerate, and when our poor fellows were buried, the Admiral cried as if he had been their father.”*

In addition to his efforts to get the dockyard and defences of Simon's Town into a state of efficiency, Sir Harry was ever forward in promoting the well-being of those under his care. In conjunction with the Military Commandant, General Goodenough, he energetically set about the formation of a sailors' and soldiers' club at Cape Town. Such an institution was especially needed, for there was no place where the men, whilst on leave, could resort for recreation, food, and lodging, at a suitable cost, except undesirable places.

In his efforts to bring the navy more closely before the public eye, Sir Harry on several occasions invited the members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council to make short cruises in the ships of the squadron, in order that they might have the opportunity of witnessing the firing exercises and manœuvres of the ships, and in other ways endeavoured to stir up the public to take a keener interest in the Service he loved so well.

* An unknown correspondent.

After the departure of his much-beloved flagship "St. George," Sir Harry's time at the Cape drew rapidly to a close. Indeed, the tenure of his appointment normally expired earlier, but was extended by the Admiralty to May, 1898, when he was relieved by Admiral Harris. South Africa generally deplored his approaching departure. He was feasted and fêted in all directions, and both Houses of Parliament entertained him at a public banquet, while numerous dinners and receptions were arranged in his honour by people of all shades of opinion. The inhabitants of Simon's Town especially regarded Sir Harry with the greatest affection. Perfect harmony had prevailed the whole time that the admiral had been amongst them. Besides working in accord with the local authorities, he had used his best endeavours always in the furtherance of any scheme for the benefit of the town, and it was entirely due to him that a new large reservoir for the town's water-supply had been erected. He never failed to impress upon the Admiralty the absolute necessity for building a graving-dock. He pointed out that, in the event of war, there was not a dock in the whole of Cape Colony where a ship could enter for repairs, the dock at Cape Town being so small that the "St. George" was unable to enter it.

The people of Simon's Town marked their appreciation of the admiral by presenting him with an

illuminated address, and Lady Rawson with a very fine ostrich-feather fan.

At last, on June 8, after a stay of three years, Sir Harry and Lady Rawson left South Africa for good, never to return. In his diary the admiral writes : “Homeward bound. Crowds to see us off, and all most kind.”

CHAPTER X

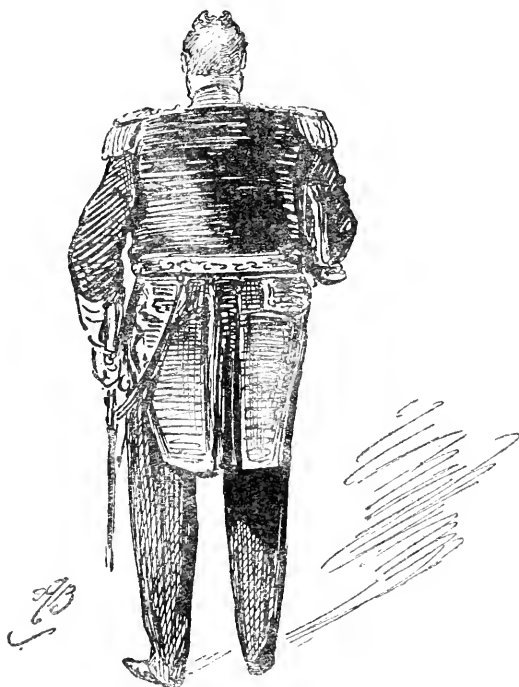
Continued ill-health — Commander-in-chief of the Channel Squadron—A pen portrait of the Admiral—Channel Squadron—European situation, 1898—Speech at Glasgow—Views in regard to the Service—Position as naval tactician—Responsibilities of an Admiral—Renewal of Italian amenities—Entertains King and Queen of Portugal—Manœuvres of 1899—Importance of wireless telegraphy—Queen Victoria visits Ireland—Channel Squadron as escort—Firing experiments on board the “Belleisle.”

FOR six months after his return from South Africa Sir Harry remained on half-pay. His health was very bad, and doctors ordered a strict course of baths and waters at Harrogate. Moreover, the hip trouble still pained him terribly, and he was unable to take the necessary exercise which would have restored him to health. For months at a time he had scarcely any intermission from pain, and yet it is characteristic of the man that he never lost his genial and kindly manner. Many who were brought into contact with him went away unaware that they had conversed with a man who was suffering great pain. However, careful treatment helped in a mild degree to bring him back to that good health which he had been without so long.

Towards the end of the year 1898 it was rumoured

that Sir Harry was to have the command of the Channel Squadron. He had already, on March 19, been promoted to Vice-admiral, and the rumour was confirmed by the Queen's approval of the

*Portsmouth.
Aug 1896*



appointment. On December 20, 1898, he hoisted his flag in the "Majestic" at Portsmouth, relieving Admiral Sir Henry F. Stephenson in the command.

A striking pen portrait of the admiral at this time is given by Mr. James Douglas. "For nine

persons out of ten in the Fleet the Admiral is a nebulous awe, an inchoate terror, an amorphous fate. A king or emperor is accessible compared to him. His flagship is a temple of dread, his cabin a holy of holies. Hundreds of eyes watch his signals with the eager fear of slaves, whose heads may roll on the floor at the nod of a despot. A grim, terse commendation from the flag sends a broad smile round every battleship and cruiser, and a grim, terse rebuke sends a shudder through us all. The bare thought of being in the Admiral's presence gives one who has caught the spirit of the Navy cold shudders. The notion of speaking to him clamps your heart with iron fright. The idea of penetrating into his cabin and thrusting yourself under his august eye savours of imbecile foolhardiness. But, nevertheless, I took my life in my hands, and rushed in where naval officers feared to tread. The Commander was going to the 'Majestic.' Would he take me with him? He would, but as to seeing the Admiral, his smile was a dictionary of genial incredulity. . . . I am introduced to the officer of the watch, and presently I find myself chatting with the Flag-Lieutenant. Will the Admiral see me? Again the genially incredulous smile. It is five o'clock. The 'Majestic' sails at six. H'm! The Flag-Lieutenant will ask the Admiral. He goes and comes. Yes, the Admiral will see me, and I am conducted past poker-backed sentries, through rooms papered with beflagged charts, into the

innermost core of the innermost heart of Admiraldom.

“The cabin is capacious, and abounds with gigantic Chesterfields and titanic easy chairs. But there is a man in the cabin who makes everything shrink small. As he rises to shake hands and to welcome cordially the rash intruder, it is obvious that the Admiral is bigger than this big battleship’s big cabin.

“His great frame is built for strength, endurance, fortitude, patience, nerve, daring, valour, determination, and, if need be, desperate death. One can conjure up pictures of this giant in action, hurling his squadrons to certain destruction, sacrificing ships and men in order to tear from the bloody jaws of destiny the glory and pride of England.

“The head is huge—too huge for an ordinary man. On anybody else’s shoulders it would be as incongruous as a lion’s head on a sheep’s body. The deep jaw, the fiercely shaggy eyebrows, the steady, stern, unsoftening eyes, the masterful nose, the tumultuous mane of curling hair, the rough beard and moustache, made severe by the iron-grey of the iron years—it is the front of a sea-king!

“And the voice is tuned to the unyielding eyes and the massive head—deep as the roar of the Admiral’s own guns, but sound as a bell, and clear as the clear thought of the clear brain it utters.

“There is nothing trifling or petty about this

man—large in his outlook, in his grip, in his conceptions. His mind working like the sea in great spaces, untrammelled by the fetters of officialdom, by the futilities of social nothingdom, the Admiral sits, a man ready to shake the world with the delegated thunder of an empire.”

At the age of fifty-five, then, Sir Harry had now reached the zenith of his naval career. It was a notable instance of well-merited promotion, to what may be described as the “blue riband” of the Navy at home. He had made his interest in high places by his own excellence rather than by any great amount of inherited association with those who sit in high places in the naval hierarchy. Perhaps one of the most disinterested tributes to his worth was forthcoming in the cordial welcome which the announcement of the appointment gained for him, not only from the public and the Press, but more especially from his contemporaries in the Service. The fleet which Sir Harry was now called upon to command was the forerunner of the present Home Fleet. It consisted of six battleships of the “Majestic” class—namely, the “Majestic,” “Hannibal,” “Prince George,” “Mars,” “Jupiter,” and “Magnificent”—and two of the “Royal Sovereign” class—the “Repulse” and “Resolution”—three first-class cruisers and sixteen other cruisers, which, with gun-boats and half a dozen torpedo boats, made up a squadron, not perhaps very large, but at that time more powerful for its size than any in the

world. When Sir Harry Rawson took command at the end of 1898 the international situation from the naval point of view was entirely different from what we find it now. Germany was not then the chief factor in the game, neither was there an Entente Cordiale. France and Russia together occupied the position towards us that Germany holds now. Since the formation of the Dual Alliance, the Allies had found themselves in a position of overwhelming naval supremacy to the central European Powers. "France, by her traditions as a naval and colonial power, in the absence of the Entente, formed a very potential menace to ourselves. Her Colonies increased the risk of a collision, and her navy formed the principal danger of such a collision. Allied with Russia, neither danger was in any way mitigated, since Russia was a Power which had both possibilities of quarrel and the force to make such quarrel a serious crisis for our Empire."* At no period of our history up to then had the British Navy borne such a responsibility as it did at the time of Sir Harry's command. The situation was one which called for the most anxious watchfulness. The war in South Africa had not only temporarily restricted the military resources of the Empire to a large extent, but it had placed us in a position of greater disadvantage than any we had occupied since the Crimea. Sir Harry, in a public speech at Glasgow, wished he could

* G. W. Steevens.



CARTOON BY SPY, FROM *FLINTY FAIR*.

honestly say that the Navy was really and entirely satisfactory, but he could not do so. One of the weaknesses which he pointed out was our inability to meet such a combination as might be brought against us. He could not hide from himself that he considered we had not enough battleships and cruisers to meet any great emergency that might arise. A navy which could defy competition from any combination meant peace; a navy of doubtful strength meant, sooner or later, war. This speech, made on May 11, 1900, at a time when our relations with other Powers were somewhat strained, created a tremendous sensation. Sir Harry was privately reprimanded by the Admiralty, and Mr. Goschen expressed his displeasure in a letter to the Admiral. British naval policy at the time was directed towards furnishing the Empire with such a navy as could resist the combination of any two great fleets. But the naval activity of Russia, France, and Germany placed us in danger of being both outnumbered and outclassed in any struggle in which two great Powers might combine against us. One of the strongest indictments put forward at the time was the want of a real, as opposed to the presence of a nominal, Channel Squadron. It was pointed out that the Channel Squadron, in itself a powerful collection of ships, was really a training squadron, destined in war-time to become the Second Division of the Mediterranean Fleet. What was required was a permanent Channel

Fleet, whose duty it would be to protect our trade and our shores. Then, as now, the strategical value of the Mediterranean Squadron was discussed, analyzed, and dissected. Into that controversy Sir Harry did not enter. He was neither a statesman nor a politician, but a British Admiral, ready and willing to do the best with the ships and men at his disposal, independent of the heated discussions of the day. His duty, as he saw it, lay in the fleet under his command, and he set himself to make that fleet efficient, and maintain it so, without respect to political considerations.

He regarded naval tactics as the most important branch of study for the naval officer, teaching him how to utilize in war the different weapons that constitute the fighting power of his ship. He did not limit his understanding of the term "tactics" to one which deals only with dispositions and changes in the formation of fleets, or, in a word, evolutions. To him the science of tactics had for its object the investigation and study of questions concerning the relations between the fighting elements—ships, weapons, positions, and the most favourable conditions for utilizing them and their combinations in various cases that might arise in war. He conceived a naval fleet to exist for war alone, and he endeavoured to organize each one of its units with a view to successful participation in action. He threw himself heart and soul into the furtherance of all the

different branches of his profession—*moral*, training, administration, command, evolutions, drill, torpedo, and gunnery. With regard to the two latter, it is interesting to record Sir Harry's opinion : " Always provided the Whitehead torpedo is not converted into a destructive mine on board its own ship before it can destroy the enemy, it is certainly superior to ramming, but I do not consider that everything else should be subordinated to its use. I do not agree that the 'Huascar's' engagement with the 'Shah' goes to prove that the power of artillery has declined since the introduction of the torpedo. The largest gun on board was only twelve tons, and these guns did inflict very vital injury. They killed her three senior officers and disabled her steering-gear—two of the most serious damages that could be dealt her, to lose both her head and her tail. Considering that the 'Huascar' was overmatched six to one in guns and of inferior speed, her capture is not surprising ; but if twelve-ton guns killed her three senior officers and disabled her steering-gear, it will be conceded that twenty-five and thirty-eight ton guns are likely to do increased damage."

This was written as long ago as 1881, and he does not appear to have had cause to change his opinion as to the relative merits of accurate gun-fire and the use of the torpedo. He made proficiency in shooting his first care in the Channel Squadron, and initiated a new era in gunnery practice.

As a master of naval tactics, his contemporaries

and brother officers acknowledged him to be without a superior, and his appointment to the Channel Squadron gave official endorsement to that view. But apart from the manifold branches of the naval profession, to which allusion has already been made, Sir Harry, in common with the holders of any important naval commands, had duties to perform which, strictly speaking, lay outside his profession. The functions of Navy men comprise those of diplomatists as well as tacticians. There was a tremendous significance attached to the presence of such a collection of warships as the Channel Squadron in some foreign port. Sir Harry was the soul of hospitality, both among his own officers and the society of foreign ports where he chanced to let go his anchor for a day, or maybe a week. The diplomacy of an Admiral is so much a matter of personal adaptation of the policy of the Government of the day that he can hardly share his responsibility with any one of his staff. So self-centred is his responsibility, and so excellent his all-round qualifications, that as a rule a naval Commander-in-chief can carry out even military manœuvres with the aid only of his Flag-captain and Flag-lieutenant. No naval officer cares to be tied to parapets or restricted in the independence of action which permits him to carry out the wishes of the Government in his own way. Thus the position of an officer commanding such a fleet as the Channel Squadron was second to none in any service, permitting him an extensive

field of action, with unrestricted liberties to make or mar a diplomatic coup by methods time-honoured since the days of Nelson.

Instances illustrating this were numerous during Sir Harry's command of the Channel Squadron. In April, 1899, the fleet visited Aranci Bay, and was honoured by a visit from King Humbert and Queen Margherita. In the eloquent speech in which the King responded to the toast proposed by Sir Harry, His Majesty referred to the manifold memories of sympathy shown by the British dynasty, the British nation, and the British navy, towards the House of Savoy and the Italian nation and navy. "These," His Majesty added, "are traditional memories of long and even ancient date, which will explain how the wish to see the British and Italian flags wave side by side in the interests of peace is always met on our part with the same sentiments of deep and enduring friendship." Without overrating the significance of these international amenities, it must be conceded that they constitute valuable proofs of good-will and a desire for peace. But a few weeks previously irritation had been displayed in Italy against this country over the terms of the Anglo-French agreement with regard to the Soudan, and it was therefore none the less satisfactory that an opportunity should so soon have arisen, due to the visit of Sir Harry's squadron, for a public and solemn reiteration of the sentiments of real and enduring friendship based on a permanent community of

interests as well as on historical sympathies which united the two nations.

Three weeks later Sir Harry entertained the King and Queen of Portugal on board his flagship at Lisbon, when His Majesty emphasized his friendship for the British people.

The naval manœuvres for 1899 next claimed Sir Harry's attention. The scheme laid down for the two rival fleets, A and B, was as follows : B fleet, representing the "friendly" squadron, under the command of Admiral Sir Compton Domvile, was ordered to pick up a convoy at a given rendezvous in the Atlantic, and escort it back to Milford Haven. A fleet, under Sir Harry's command, representing the enemy, was to seize the convoy, if possible, before the protecting fleet reached it, and in the event of not succeeding, to intercept the escort and give battle. Admiral Domvile was assigned the slow ships, but to compensate for this he was given a long start in the race for the convoy, and, moreover, was acquainted with the position of the rendezvous. During the operations a dense fog settled over the Atlantic, and Admiral Domvile succeeded in bringing his convoy safely into harbour. Without entering into technical reasons, it is sufficient to state that the task entrusted to the "enemy" was virtually an impossible one in the circumstances. He had to search the whole Atlantic—a spacious area—in order to find his intended

prey. He sent out his swiftest cruisers, steaming night and day, not in one direction only, but to all points of the compass. Manœuvring under these unequal conditions, the fleets could only meet by accident. As it happened, they never met, although Sir Harry wrote in his diary : “ Discovered afterwards that convoy was just thirty miles outside our lowest curve of search.”

The scheme laid down was obviously intended to test the fleet's capacity for protecting commerce, but little conclusive proof was gained on this point. In time of war the defending commander would not always know when and where to look for his convoy, as he did in this case, nor would his adversary be always baffled by fog. But although the 1899 manœuvres were barren of lessons in this respect, they conclusively proved, practically for the first time, the immense importance of Marconi's wireless telegraphy in naval warfare. Although Admiral Domvile was acquainted with the rendezvous, he was ignorant of the whereabouts of the hostile fleet. But his enterprise was greatly facilitated by wireless telegraphy. Even in the prevailing fog it was possible to send fast scouts ahead, but these would have been comparatively valueless in the atmospheric conditions which existed, so far as ordinary signalling was concerned. As it was, they had no difficulty in maintaining detailed intercourse with the admiral up to thirty miles—a notable achievement fourteen years ago. Sir Harry's fleet had no such

advantage, and the victory consequently lay, not with the B fleet, but with Marconi.

In April, 1900, Queen Victoria paid her long-promised visit to Ireland, and the Channel Squadron were present at Kingstown for the occasion. The visit of the fleet was naturally the source of much gratification to the people of Dublin, who eagerly availed themselves of the privilege of inspecting the warships anchored in the roadstead.

When the Queen arrived in the Royal Yacht, the Admiral had charge of the naval arrangements for the landing and reception of Her Majesty, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught being in command of the military arrangements. On April 21 the Queen reviewed a naval brigade, consisting of two thousand bluejackets and marines drawn from the fleet, under the command of Captain Randolph Foote, R.N., the field-gun batteries, consisting of sixteen guns, under Commander D. R. de Chair, taking the right of the line. On the 26th Her Majesty left Dublin in the Royal Yacht, first passing along the line, whilst the crews of the ships saluted, cheered, and sang the National Anthem, and afterwards the fleet escorted Her Majesty to Holyhead.

It may, perhaps, be interesting to quote the two following letters, written by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught to the admiral, showing His Royal Highness's interest in the welfare of the Service, and his desire that the Navy should be represented in the welcome to the Queen :

“THE ROYAL HOSPITAL,

“DUBLIN,

“*March 25, 1900.*

“MY DEAR RAWSON,

“I am delighted to hear that you and the Channel Squadron will be at Kingstown for the Queen's arrival on the 3rd. I am making all the military arrangements for Her Majesty's reception then, and her entry into Dublin, and I now write to ask you whether you would participate in her reception at Kingstown on landing, on the 4th.

“It would give myself and your comrades of the Army so much pleasure if you would furnish a guard of honour of bluejackets at the landing-place, and if you would line a portion of the route at Kingstown with bluejackets and marines from the Channel Squadron.

“As soon as I know that you would be willing to accede to my request, I will let you know full particulars.

“The Navy is very little seen in Ireland, and I am certain that the presence of a considerable force of seamen and marines would be very much appreciated by the public.

“Looking forward to meeting you again so soon,

“Believe me,

“Yours very sincerely,

“ARTHUR.”

Again, after the Queen's review of the naval brigade in Phoenix Park, the Duke wrote :

“ FARMLEIGH, CASTLEKNOCK,

“ CO. DUBLIN,

“ *April 21, 1900.*

“ MY DEAR RAWSON,

“ The Queen has asked me to be the medium of expressing to you her great pleasure at having seen such a fine body of men as that which formed the naval brigade at to-day's review.

“ Her Majesty wishes that you will convey to both officers, seamen, and marines her appreciation of the smart appearance of the naval brigade, and her satisfaction with their movements on parade. She was particularly struck with the batteries, and the manner in which they doubled past.

“ On my own part, I hope you will allow me to express my grateful thanks to you for having co-operated with me on this occasion, and by thus making to-day's parade the success which I think it was. May I ask you to convey to Captain Foote and all under him my great appreciation of the manner in which they acquitted themselves, and to assure him of the honour I felt in having the naval brigade under my command this afternoon?

“ Believe me,

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ ARTHUR.”

In May of the same year the “Majestic” carried out firing experiments on the old turret-ship “Belle-isle.” The vessel was iron-built, with armour on her sides and central battery varying in thickness

from nine to sixteen inches. Her displacement was four thousand eight hundred and seventy tons, and she left Portsmouth Dockyard for Selsea Bill, the scene of the experiment, completely equipped as for war, with the exception that she carried no explosives on board; but all her other stores had been shipped. Splinter-nets were placed over the upper deck and over the machinery, which was also protected by armour-gratings. She carried, moreover, a steam launch and cutter in her davits, and fore and aft she had on her upper deck two fully loaded torpedoes in her deck-tubes ready to be discharged. Still further to represent a ship fully prepared for action, she carried a crew of one hundred and thirty dummy men made of non-inflammable wood, her bunkers were filled with coal, and her watertight doors were closed. Except, therefore, that she was not completely cleared for action, she was in as good fighting trim as on the day when commissioned for service. Soon after ten o'clock the "Majestic" weighed and proceeded to take up position for firing. The object of the experiment was to ascertain the risk of fire in action on account of wood fittings, where such precautions are taken as may reasonably be expected. It was also intended to gather information as to the extent of damage likely to be caused by various descriptions of projectiles when fired under conditions as nearly resembling an actual engagement as possible, and to give opportunities for considering the best means

of rapidly making good such damages as may occur.

The "Belleisle" had eight feet of water under her keel at ten o'clock, at eleven o'clock she had scarcely six feet, and at dead low water she had only one foot. She was moored for the experiment over the Medmery Bank, thus avoiding any danger to navigation if sunk, and insuring her being easily raised if she foundered.

The "Majestic" fired her first gun from the twelve-inch starboard gun of the fore barbette at a range of one thousand seven hundred yards, steaming about seven knots at the time. At the first round the "Belleisle" was raked, the shell entering the stern, traversing the ship, and emerging at the bows. The twelve-inch guns were then fired as rapidly as possible, while the six six-inch quick-firing guns on the starboard side kept up an incessant fire on the "Belleisle's" port broadside. The three-pounders from the tops hailed a storm of projectiles on her deck. Immediately after the ship had been raked, the six-inch guns poured in common shell and lyddite, and in less than two minutes the "Belleisle" was on fire. In three minutes, superstructure, foc'sle, and funnel had gone, and the hulk was on fire from end to end. Dense clouds of smoke hid the target from view, yet a large percentage of shells hit. Operations having been started at one thousand seven hundred yards astern of the hulk, firing ceased at one thousand seven

hundred yards ahead, though in the meantime the range had decreased to one thousand yards, the "Majestic" steaming about seven knots.

When firing ceased, the inspection party boarded the vessel to view the results. "To describe the 'Belleisle' as a complete wreck is to convey an inadequate idea of the work of destruction. She can perhaps be compared to a great house that has been burned throughout, and where the falling débris has created such havoc and confusion that even the outline of the original structure cannot be traced. One could not distinguish by shape which was the stem and which the stern. Around the turrets it seemed as if there had been a great upheaval. Of the steam launch and cutter that formerly hung in the davits not a splinter remained."*

Important lessons were gained from this experiment. The trial demonstrated the value of the armour then in use, for though some of the plates were badly dented, none were penetrated. The effect of the lyddite was so complete that every man in the dummy crew was smashed to atoms, the inspecting party agreeing that the crew would have been entirely destroyed in a fraction of the time that the engagement lasted. The close range, sometimes only one thousand yards for the twelve-inch guns, accounted for the extreme havoc wrought by the "Majestic's" fire. The "Belleisle" was subsequently kept intact for some time in Portsmouth

* *Times* correspondent.

Harbour, in order that officers and men of the Gunnery School, carpenters, artificers, and others, might be instructed in the most rapid ways of making temporary repairs.

Sir Harry himself was scarcely satisfied with the result of the trial. He reported that the system of communicating with the gun's crews by sound signals (bugles, voice-tubes, and telephones) during the firing had proved utterly useless; he advised increasing the range of practice firing to five thousand or six thousand yards, and half-yearly practice at these distances; he drew attention to the danger of ships with unarmoured ends, and the difficulty of keeping torpedo nets and booms in position and uninjured during an engagement; he emphasized the immense value of good individual control of guns; and finally, he pointed out that more valuable information would have been gained if only one shot at a time had been fired at the "Belleisle," and the damage done by it immediately examined. It could then have been decided what damage was due to each description of projectile.

CHAPTER XI

Naval manœuvres of 1900—Scheme of operations—Opening of hostilities—Sir Harry Rawson's plan of campaign—Sir Gerard Noel's plan of campaign—Opening moves of the rival tacticians—A Fleet checked—Successful juncture with A3—Closing stages of the operations—Lessons of the manœuvres.

IN July, 1900, the annual manœuvres took place. On this occasion the scheme of operations was more complex, and the rules governing the manœuvres more carefully drawn up than had been the case in previous years.

It is therefore proposed to give a more detailed account of them than was given of the manœuvres of 1899. Moreover, the rival fleets on this occasion were commanded respectively by Sir Harry Rawson and Rear-Admiral (now Admiral of the Fleet) Sir Gerard Noel, probably at that time the two best tacticians in the Service. The "general idea" of the manœuvres, as set forth in the Admiralty memorandum on the subject, was—

"1. To obtain information relative to the working of a fleet which is composed of vessels of all classes, and is fighting for the command of the sea.

"2. To ascertain the most suitable distance at which to establish a temporary base for a squadron

watching a hostile fortified fort is a subsidiary question.

“3. The power which cruisers may or may not possess of hunting down and driving torpedo craft into port is an important point.”

The general scheme of the manœuvres was as follows :

“A hostile fleet (A), inferior in battleships to another fleet (B), is divided into two squadrons :

“A1 at Berehaven.

“A2 at Lough Swilly.

“A hostile reinforcement A3, which will make $A1 + A2 + A3$ nearly equal to $B1 + B2$ in battleships, is expected from the Mediterranean.

“B1 is stationed at Milford, and

“B2 at Lamlash.

“The whole of Ireland is hostile territory, and belongs to A fleet. The whole of Great Britain, from Cape Wrath to Land’s End, the Isle of Man, and the Scilly Isles, belong to B fleet.

“A fleet was furnished with torpedo boats, supported by fast small craft, whilst B fleet had a flotilla of torpedo-boat destroyers. The following ports were fortified and placed in a state of defence :

“In Great Britain, Milford Haven.

“In Ireland, Berehaven, Queenstown, and Lough Swilly, all other ports being unfortified.

“ Each fleet was to endeavour to obtain command of the sea—that is, to defeat the other, shut him up in his ports, and especially to clear the sea of his hostile craft.

“ As soon as the whole of the ships composing the two fleets have arrived in their respective ports, a telegram will be sent from the Admiralty, naming the hour at which hostilities are to commence. All battleships are to be considered equal in fighting power to the ‘Majestic.’

“ Ships put out of action can take no further part in the operations, and must return to one of their base ports.”

Such is the broad outline of the instructions the rival Admirals received, and at 2 a.m. on July 24 the Admiralty telegraphed that hostilities had commenced, and that they were to cease at 2 a.m. on August 3, ten days being thus allowed for either of the fleets to gain command of the sea.

It will be convenient at this stage to give Sir Harry's original intentions when “war” was first declared, and those of his opponent, Sir Gerard Noel.

Sir Harry's first plan was to make a feint at Lamlash and Greenock, as if he projected a raid on the Irish Channel, and thus draw Admiral Noel to that quarter while he combined his three squadrons on the west coast of Ireland. He apprehended that Admiral Noel was likely at the outset to hold the northern and southern entrances to the Irish

Channel with his fleets at Milford and Lamlash, and having thus secured the central portion of his own territory against attack, would adapt his further dispositions to the development of those of his assailant.

Accordingly, Sir Harry decided to join A2, proceed past the Mull of Cantyre during daylight, and harass Lamlash, destroy the ship-building yards of Greenock and Glasgow, and fall back upon Lough Swilly before dark, and, if a superior force of the enemy were in the neighbourhood, retire to a rendezvous where he would be joined by A3. In the meantime he proposed leaving a strong force of cruisers south of Ireland, to capture or destroy the enemy's cruisers and torpedo-destroyers, and prey upon his commerce, which would thus be cut off from the large mercantile centres of the west of England and Scotland.

Concentration on both sides seemed to be the course indicated by the strategic requirements of the situation, but Sir Harry's assumption of his opponent's movements was perhaps a precarious one, and was very soon disallowed by the event as will be seen hereafter.

Sir Gerard Noel, having effected a junction with B1, and it being impossible from their relative positions at the commencement of hostilities to prevent A1 and A2 joining, it was obviously his object to prevent the junction of A1 and A2 with A3.

For some reason or other Sir Gerard was placed at a disadvantage in the initial stages of the operation by not being informed of the date and hour of A3 passing Gibraltar. Certain that he would receive this information, he had framed his plan of action accordingly, and consequently was under the impression that A1 and A2 would endeavour to join A3 within the first twenty-four hours. He therefore made his dispositions so as to scout, and to have B fleet in a position likely to intercept A3. With this view B1 and B2, having combined off the west of Ireland, proceeded to the westward of Bantry Bay. This was on July 26.

In the meantime Sir Harry, who was then in the neighbourhood of Lough Swilly with A1 and A2, received news that the "enemy" had rounded Brow Head, and this confirmed his conclusion that the two B fleets had joined, and he realized that Admiral Noel held a very strong position, for he lay between him (Sir Harry) and A3. He saw that he could neither come down the Irish Channel, nor along the west coast of Ireland, for he calculated that Admiral Noel could stretch a chain of scouts from the mouth of the Channel right away to the westerly limit on the twentieth meridian. If one of these scouts sighted the A fleet, he could pass the word swiftly along the chain, and it would be impossible to evade the surveillance. The operations had now lasted some fifty-six hours, and the course they had taken had not so far proved

favourable to the prospects of the A fleet. The B fleet had taken up a position from which it could not be dislodged, while it afforded Admiral Noel an excellent opportunity of intercepting A3.

On the receipt of the news that B fleet was now lying in wait off the south-west of Ireland to intercept his reinforcements, Sir Harry's plan underwent an immediate and complete change.

In any case, Admiral Noel had occupied an interior position of such advantage as to paralyze the offensive attitude originally assigned by Sir Harry to A1 and A2, which would now have the effect of leaving A3 in the air and in a position of grave peril.

Sir Harry was at this juncture undoubtedly in an unfavourable position as regards his main object—namely, to obtain the command of the sea. That he so quickly extricated himself and once more succeeded in gaining an equal footing with his brilliant opponent is sure proof of his skill as a strategist.

It may seem very paradoxical, that whereas Sir Harry was preparing to undertake a raid in force into the Irish Channel when he thought it likely to be occupied by a superior but divided force of the enemy, he should hesitate to execute that design as soon as he had reason to believe that the enemy had concentrated his force in another and distant locality.

But naval warfare abounds in paradoxes of this

kind, being a department of human activity in which well-conceived action at a distance is of amazing potency and effect.

Sir Harry's original design was not, perhaps, very happily conceived, but at least it offered a chance of striking an effective but not decisive blow in case the enemy had been so ill-advised as to leave an opening for it. But his opponent was better inspired. From the outset Sir Gerard must have perceived that the game would in the end be his if he could succeed in intercepting the reinforcements destined for A, or even in so diverting their course as to head them away from a preconcerted point of action; and as soon as this design on B's part was disclosed or became apparent to Sir Harry, it became instantly necessary for him to do what he could to frustrate it. Accordingly his projected raid on the Irish Channel was forthwith abandoned. It was still feasible, of course, on the hypothesis that B had withdrawn his fleet to the westward, and on that hypothesis it was even more feasible than when it was originally projected. But though it might achieve a temporary and somewhat theatrical success, it would in the circumstances do nothing whatever towards advancing the main object of the campaign, which was to obtain the command of the sea. Moreover, it might go far to render that object unattainable by A, if B's destroyers, which might be expected to swarm in the Irish Channel, should succeed in torpedoing any of A's battleships.

Little was to be gained by subordinating the main object of the campaign to some subsidiary purpose, and in this case Sir Harry's object was to outmanœuvre, divide, and defeat the enemy's fleet.

Accordingly, divining that Admiral Noel had resolved to place his fleet across the advance of A3, he decided to do his best to frustrate this design. His intentions can best be set forth in the signal which he made to his fleet at this juncture: "I conclude that B1 and B2 must have combined by this time, and that they are some distance from Brow Head. I am now going to try and effect a juncture with A3, which will probably end in a fight. "Diadem's" division of cruisers has been ordered to proceed to lat. $47^{\circ} 3'$, long. 15° , and then run south along the fifteenth meridian to meet A3, and direct the Rear-Admiral to meet me at a rendezvous in lat. $47^{\circ} 35'$, long. 20° , about 5 p.m. on the 29th."

The situation as it stood or was interpreted by Sir Harry can therefore be defined as follows: A1 and A2 were combined in full force off Lough Swilly, a position which Admiral Noel was no doubt well aware of.

B1 and B2 were combined in full force and occupied a position some distance from Brow Head, whence, if he chose, Admiral Noel could intercept the advance of A3; or as an alternative he could spread out his ships so as to cover the greater part of a circle, having its centre at Brow Head, and a radius equal to the distance from

Brow Head due west to the twentieth meridian. If he adopted this latter course, no junction could be effected between the divided forces of A without the knowledge and interference of B, unless one or other, or both, could pass outside the arc of a circle whose radius was the utmost distance which B, resting on Brow Head to the eastward, could cover with his ships to the westward. But A3 had been directed to advance north on the fifteenth meridian. Such a course would pass not far from the centre of B's assumed position, and could not therefore be pursued without grave risk of disaster. Hence it was necessary to send fresh orders to A3, and this was done in the manner indicated in Sir Harry's signal—namely, to advance north, not on the fifteenth, but on the twentieth meridian, some two hundred and twenty miles farther to the westward, Sir Harry himself endeavouring to join A3 by steaming outside B's presumed range of observation to a rendezvous in lat. $47^{\circ} 35'$ and long. 20° .

Accordingly the combined A1 and A2 fleets left Lough Swilly and steamed out due west into the Atlantic with the object of creeping round the outside limits of B's chain of outposts. When they reached the comparative safety of the fifteenth meridian, Sir Harry cut off a corner by steering south-west, until he struck the twentieth meridian. Then he dropped like a plummet down the Atlantic chart, skirting parallel to the twentieth meridian.

When about half-way, he found that the slow-footed "Conqueror," one of the older and slower battleships, was keeping him back sadly, so he sent her along one side of the triangle, while the remainder of the fleet ran down the base. At three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, five days after the operations commenced, and five days before they were to cease, he met A3 at the mid-Atlantic rendezvous, and steaming north-east towards the English Channel, along the other side of the triangle, met the "Conqueror" at noon on Monday at the apex. A Napoleonic exploit in the domain of large ideas and their large execution.

Thus having twelve battleships in hand, he steamed to Queenstown to use them, and when he finally reached this port, he had covered thirteen hundred miles of sea, and successfully outwitted his antagonist.

It is now necessary to return to the movements of the B fleet. It was not until the afternoon of Thursday the 26th, when Sir Harry had started off on his long journey to meet A3, that Admiral Noel received definite news of A3's whereabouts. He was aware that A1 and A2 were far to the north, but of their destination he was ignorant. He considered that they were either making for Lamlash, his base in the north—that is to say, his vulnerable point—or else that they were moving to a rendezvous to the westward to meet A3.

But it was useless for him to go south after A3, since they were at least three knots faster and had

more coal, which would enable them to escape in any direction they wished.

He therefore decided to go slowly north towards Lough Swilly and at the same time send four cruisers at high speed to the North Channel by way of the Irish Sea to reinforce his position there, in case the enemy should be driven in that direction by the movements of B battle fleet. Accordingly B battle fleet steamed northwards, and arrived ten miles off Lough Swilly on the morning of the 28th. (It will be remembered that at this time the combined A fleets were moving towards Queenstown.)

Lough Swilly was searched by Admiral Noel, and finding none of the enemy there, he concluded that his last chance of meeting A1 and A2 before they could join hands with A3 had passed. Had he known before leaving Milford that A3 had not then passed Gibraltar, Admiral Noel, after joining B2, would have been moving north with his whole fleet on a line of rendezvous, instead of wasting his time and coal in uselessly searching to the westward. He would then have got the information from his scouts that the enemy was in the neighbourhood of Lough Swilly, and at once pushed on to the north, with every prospect, at that time, either of meeting and overwhelming A1 and A2 at sea, or of driving him into the shelter of Lough Swilly ; in other words, shutting him up in his ports.

From July 29 up to August 1 B battle fleet patrolled the Irish Sea, waiting for news of the

enemy. It was no use going out into the Atlantic by either the north or the south, as the enemy was just as likely to be sighted in the one part as in the other, and there was no reason which could have prevented him from joining up with A3.

Meanwhile Sir Harry had been busy all August 1 in sweeping up his cruisers and small craft and collecting his fleet together. By Thursday morning, the 2nd, the A fleet was a "fleet in being" in every sense of the word; but the margin of time left to him had shrunk to one day. He had no elbow-room in hours. He could not turn round tactically in one day. The weather, which had rapidly become bad, crippled his lame ducks, the "Edinburgh" and "Conqueror," two old battleships forming part of A2, and compelled him to send them into Queenstown. It also locked up his torpedo-boat flotilla in Waterford Harbour.

Accordingly, when at noon on August 1 Admiral Noel, being informed that A's battleships had been seen sixty miles south of Cork Harbour, proceeded south down the Irish Sea to meet them, Sir Harry was not in a position to give battle.

On August 2 A's battleships were sighted by the enemy at the entrance to St. George's Channel, and a general chase commenced. B's fleet, with its thirteen battleships and cruisers, was too strong for the crippled A fleet, and Sir Harry saw at once that it was therefore hopeless to engage. His only chance of keeping his fleet "in being," and so pre-

vent B from claiming command of the sea, was to send the old and slow "Dreadnought" and flotilla away, and draw the enemy to the south-west. The fear of destroyers holding to him and attacking by night prevented his running down, and even threatening an action; but even in the chase he was harassed and retarded by his lame ducks. At a speed of thirteen knots nine of the enemy's battleships closed on him, and he was compelled to rid himself of yet another slow ship, the "Sultan," which was sent off to Berehaven, and the rest of the fleet continued to the south-west at fourteen knots, eventually shaking B fleet off.

Such is a bare narrative of the principal strategical points of the memorable 1900 manœuvres. There were many minor points during the operations which have not been touched upon, since they did not affect the main outcome of the manœuvres; but many important lessons were gained.

First and foremost, it was generally conceded that the addition of such ships as the "Edinburgh," "Conqueror," and "Dreadnought" to A fleet proved to be a loss instead of a gain in strength. Sir Harry's strategical movements and battle tactics were entirely upset by these ships. To get command of the sea, speed, with coal capacity, is the one great factor. It enables an inferior numerical force to out-manœuvre and draw out a superior but slower one, to decline to fight when there is no opportunity of winning, to drag the slower force

about by threatening distant points, and when the enemy's slower ships have to drop astern, to seize the advantage and fight. When Sir Harry heard that the B fleet had combined with all its cruisers and many destroyers, and had steamed to the westward, he "was struck with the splendid strategical position which my adversary had taken up, and had to admit to myself that, unless fortune favoured me, I had received my checkmate."

Of course B had slow ships also, but because of the shorter distances he had to work over, they did not hamper him so much as in the case of A.

To sum up, since neither side obtained the command, the result must be written a draw. When the operations ended, Sir Harry's fleet was still intact, and although he had not beaten his enemy, his enemy had not beaten him. It was time, not talent, that failed him. If he had had three more days, he might have tried to draw Admiral Noel, and, after stringing him out, turned and beaten him in detail. He might have used his torpedo boats. In short, when the "general idea" is so vast, ten days is too short a period for the maturing of a great plan. When the operations ended, B fleet was very short of fuel, and it would have been absolutely necessary for them to have gone into port for coal. A fleet would have been in command of the sea, and could have steamed to the north, calling at Liverpool, Greenock, and Glasgow, damaging the shipping, and even then be coaled

and out of Lough Swilly before B fleet could have brought them to action. Again, when Sir Harry decided to try and evade the B fleet by stealing



along the extreme limit of the manœuvre field from Lough Swilly, he had to make up his mind whether to leave the slow ships "Edinburgh" and

“Conqueror” there, and break through with his quicker ships. But seeing that time would not allow him to go south to join A3, and then get up north again to pick up the “Edinburgh” and “Conqueror” before the termination of hostilities, he decided to take them with him. Bitterly did he regret doing so, for with his quicker ships he might have secured three or four days’ manœuvring before the termination of hostilities, and probably have been able to score heavily. As it turned out, these slow vessels acted as a constant drag upon him, and at the end had to go into port to coal just when he required them most. In reality, B was apparently ignorant of this weak spot in his opponent’s armour (due to his not having been informed of the date and hour of A3 passing Gibraltar), and Sir Harry could have saved himself a long journey and an anxious time. However, under the circumstances his move to the westward was considered strategically correct, and had it not been for his slow ships the move would have been successful, for he would have had time, after joining A3, to manœuvre so as to detach B from his slower ships with a prospect of success.

CHAPTER XII

Visit of squadron to Lisbon—And to Gibraltar—Gibraltar Committee—Torpedo-Boat Committee—Hauls down his flag—Appointed Governor of New South Wales—Arrives in Sydney—New South Wales Constitution—A warm welcome.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1900 the Channel Squadron paid yet another visit to Lisbon, and was received with the greatest enthusiasm. The King, the Government, the municipality, and the citizens vied with each other in their endeavours to do honour to the British fleet.

At a period when Anglophobia reigned, or was said to reign, over the Continent, this visit of a British squadron to Portuguese waters gave striking proof of our friendship with at least one Continental Power. The country was being constantly told by Pro-Boers and Little Englanders that the Continent of Europe, and even "the whole civilized world," was against Britain. They found the utmost satisfaction in pointing to the evidences in Anglophobe Continental papers that England was not popular, that she was hated, and that the English were regarded as brigands and robbers by their neighbours across the Channel.

The visit of the squadron to Lisbon, however, must

have given food for reflection, and proved a source of great disappointment to these Little Englanders when they found that Britain had still some friends, even in Europe.

To quote a saying at the time: "The Emperor of Germany has not quite disowned us; the King of Italy has not thrown us overboard; even the Emperor of Russia continues to be civil; and what of King Carlos of Portugal?"

His cordial and enthusiastic reception of the British fleet in the Tagus set the seal, so far as His Majesty was concerned, on Portugal's friendship for this country. It is true that England had had some differences with Portugal, which had arisen since King Carlos's visit to the Queen some few years previously; but the differences which arose over affairs at Lorenzo Marques and Beira were in the end amicably settled, and the coolness which had continued to exist for a time was now entirely obliterated.

At the time of the visit of the Channel Squadron the relations between the two countries were indeed of the most cordial character.

Portugal, as an extensive colonial power, touched our interests at many points. One of the many good results of the Boer War was the occasion it afforded for re-establishing in an unmistakable manner the former friendly spirit existing between the two countries. When the British troops reached Portuguese territory at Koomati Poort, Lord Roberts

held a grand parade in honour of the birthday of King Carlos, with the happiest results. It was doubtless intended as an acknowledgment of the fact that during the war Portugal, while occupying the position of a neutral Power, had done all that was possible to protect and facilitate British interests at Lorenzo Marques. The military compliment paid by Lord Roberts at Koomati Poort was now followed by the naval honour done to the King and people of Portugal by the presence of a large squadron of warships at Lisbon under the command of Sir Harry Rawson.

This visit of the squadron to the Tagus left a most favourable impression, and had a gratifying effect in both countries.

The year 1901 opened sadly for the Navy and the nation. Our beloved Queen died, and to the Navy fell the last sad honour of escorting her mortal remains from Osborne to Portsmouth. A great fleet of warships assembled in the historic roadsteads of the Solent and Spithead, as a mark of respect to the honoured dead. From the earliest years of her reign the Queen had always been keenly interested in all that appertained to her Navy, and at every stage of the marvellous transformation in naval construction and gunnery which her reign witnessed the Queen invariably made a point of assembling some of her many fleets for review at Spithead. The splendid vessels of war that gathered for this last mournful occasion comprised some of the noblest and

most majestic ships in the British Navy. The whole of the Channel Squadron, comprising eight of the most powerful battleships, was present, in addition to the Reserve Fleet. The vessels were moored at short distances apart in the eleven miles of waterway, extending from Cowes to the eastern end of the Isle of Wight, and thence to Portsmouth Dockyard, forming one long avenue, through which the Royal Yacht with her burden slowly steamed. Sir Harry himself had the honour of being the Senior Naval Officer afloat on this occasion. He records the day in his diary thus: "A lovely day, such as the Queen loved. I went down the line, which is in splendid order, and looks very fine. The procession was most solemn and impressive, and the King conveyed his approval of the arrangements."

In March, 1901, the Channel Squadron was present at Gibraltar to meet T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York on the first stage of their voyage in the "Ophir" to the Colonies and dependencies of the Empire.

Prior to the arrival of the Channel Squadron at Gibraltar, much discussion had arisen due to the publication of a pamphlet relating to the defences of Gibraltar, written by Mr. Gibson Bowles, M.P. The upshot of the matter was the formation of a committee convened to inquire into and report upon the works then under construction on the western side of the Rock, and the desirability of making a further harbour, docks, etc., on the eastern side.

The committee, consisting of Sir Harry Rawson as President, with Major-General Sir William Nicholson, Mr. W. Matthews, C.E., and Mr. Gibson Bowles, M.P., as members, was formed, and sat at Gibraltar, the meetings being held on board the Admiral's flagship "Majestic."

Before entering into the work of the inquiry, the committee unanimously agreed to the following propositions—viz., that it is better to have a dock with risks than no dock at all; and that even if docks at Gibraltar would not be available in war-time, they would contribute greatly to the successful issue of a war by the aid they would afford during peace-time to the repairs and efficiency of the Mediterranean and Channel Squadrons.

Already extensive harbour works, docks, and workshops were in progress on the western side of the Rock, but recent changes in artillery, the probable need of increased accommodation in the future, and the possibility of materially extending the western harbour (which even then would not suffice for the accommodation of the Mediterranean and Channel Squadrons at the same time), rendered imperative the addition of a harbour, dock, workshops, and coaling facilities on the eastern side. These, under war conditions, would be invaluable. These new works on the eastern side were accordingly recommended by the committee in addition to, and not in supersession of, the operations on the

western side, with the exception that a projected dock on the western side should be abandoned, and a larger dock be established on the eastern side. It was also recommended that the construction of one-third of the sanctioned workshops should be stopped, and equivalent workshops formed in the Rock on the eastern side, and that the storehouses should be abandoned, and the stores stowed in chambers in the Rock.

With regard to new construction on the eastern side, the committee advised the building of a graving-dock, seven hundred feet long, with a depth at low water of not less than thirty-eight feet; the provision of workshops and storehouses in suitable chambers to be formed in the Rock, adjacent to a tunnel, connecting the tunnel on the western with the dock on the eastern side; the construction of three moles on the eastern side, in a selected position, designed to form a sheltering harbour of about four hundred acres. It was recommended that the two shore moles should be about thirty-five feet broad and two thousand three hundred feet long, while the outer, or sea mole, which would have to withstand the heavy wave-stroke, due to the strong Levanters, was to be fifty feet broad and six thousand six hundred feet long. The enclosed area was to be dredged, and the committee recommended that facilities should be provided for coaling ships in the eastern harbour. The estimated cost of the harbour and graving-dock on the eastern side was four

million eight hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and the estimated time required for their construction was placed at ten years. For the tunnel, workshops, and store chambers it was estimated that an additional five hundred thousand pounds would be required.

On all the foregoing points the committee found themselves unanimously agreed, but a proposition put forward by Mr. Gibson Bowles was not supported by the other members of the committee. Mr. Bowles proposed that pending the construction of the suggested works on the eastern side, a floating dock should at once be provided and placed inside the mole in the western harbour.

Seeing that such a long period must elapse before a graving-dock on the eastern side would be available for use, Mr. Bowles's proposal received the very earnest consideration of the committee.

They found that although a floating dock has undoubtedly many advantages, such as rapidity of construction and adaptability to exceptional local conditions, it is greatly inferior to a graving-dock for repairing battleships and cruisers. As far as Gibraltar was concerned, the fact that the floating dock would have to occupy a portion of the very limited and valuable space available in the western harbour for berthing ships of war, and could not possibly be used on the eastern side for at least six years—viz., until the harbour works were so far advanced as to give it adequate protection—pre-

cluded the recommendation of a floating dock for that place.

To meet the requirements of the Mediterranean and Channel Squadrons, the committee was strongly of opinion that three docks should be provided at Gibraltar within the next few years, but considered that the provision of three docks on the western side did not obviate the necessity for a harbour and dock on the eastern side.

Whilst attaching the utmost importance to the construction of a harbour, dock, etc., on the eastern side, the committee were of opinion that the expenditure on these works should not affect the ship-building vote, the relative importance of a strong and highly efficient Fleet being paramount to all other considerations.

In this final report drawn up by Sir Harry, Sir William Nicholson and Mr. Matthews entirely concurred. Mr. Gibson Bowles, however, informed the President that he could not entertain the report, and declined to discuss it or take any further part in the proceedings; but he addressed a separate letter to the First Lord of the Admiralty, containing his own conclusions, which differed from those of the other members of the committee.

Sir Harry was appointed President of yet another Committee of Inquiry before finally hauling down his flag.

This was the Committee on Torpedo - Boat Destroyers, convened principally in consequence of

the loss of the "Cobra." However, he was not destined to complete the inquiry, for during the sittings of the committee he was appointed to the Governorship of New South Wales, the inquiry continuing for several months after he had left England.

But during the time that he presided over its deliberations, the committee gleaned much important and valuable information on the various points raised in the inquiry. To mark their sense of the value of his work on the committee, his fellow-members gave a dinner in his honour; he also received the thanks of the Lords of the Admiralty.

This was the last service rendered by Sir Harry before relinquishing the command of the Channel Squadron. This appointment, nominally for two years, was extended in his case to a further four months, and it was not until April 16, 1902, that he was succeeded in his command by Rear-Admiral A. K. Wilson, V.C., and his service afloat came to an end.

From April 9, 1857, the day on which he first set foot on board one of Her Majesty's ships, Sir Harry had been almost continuously employed afloat. During that time he won the regard and respect of all who served with or under him. That great figure with the massive head, the quick eye of the sailor, and the open and jovial countenance, had become familiar, not only in Service circles, but also to the man in the street. Without being "a popular

darling," his personality had become sufficiently well known to have earned for him the familiar nickname of "Happy Harry." His breezy bearing oiled the wheels of life, and he seemed to live above the petty annoyances inseparable from Service routine.

Yet beneath this kindly exterior there lay a shrewd knowledge of and insight into human nature. He possessed an extraordinary power of extracting the best work from those serving under him. If an officer was not a good seaman, Sir Harry made him so, and this without conscious effort; and it would be difficult to find a man better qualified in his profession, both in theory and in practice, as appeared by his conduct on all occasions. What was given him to do he did well, and thus acquired a reputation for reliability and sound judgment second to none.

It was Lord Palmerston who said: "If I want a thing done well in a distant part of the world, if I require a man with a good head, a good heart, lots of pluck, and plenty of common sense, I always send for a Captain in the Royal Navy." A generous and worthy tribute, indeed!

It is impossible to review his work while in command of the Channel Squadron, for a period extending well over two years, without a feeling of warm admiration. Handicapped to a very considerable extent by obsolete battleships and inferior cruisers, Sir Harry conceived and brought into

execution a long series of tactical exercises and manœuvres, thus adding considerably to the professional knowledge of all ranks, and giving the admiral himself a very precise acquaintance with the capacity of the fleet under his command.

Henceforth he was to serve his country in another sphere and in a far-distant part of the globe. But he carried thither the same high ideals and the same determination to give of his best as had animated him throughout his naval career.

On January 29, 1902, Sir Harry was appointed Governor of the State of New South Wales, and commenced his last period of service under the Crown. Though still retained on the Active List of the Navy, he realized that the appointment meant the severing of his connection with the Service that he loved so faithfully and well.

It was very generally supposed that, when he gave up the command of the Channel Squadron, he would realize his own life-long ambition and gain the coveted command of the Mediterranean Fleet. In one sense it was unfortunate for him that his services were required elsewhere.

Although he never regretted going to Australia for seven years, his heart and soul were in the Navy. But it had long been felt that the tie between the Mother-Country and the Colonies would be strengthened by the appointment of a British Admiral as a Colonial Governor. Though the custom was not new, it had fallen into desuetude ;

but now the proposition received a favourable reception in the most exalted circles.

It is hardly too much to say that Sir Harry went to Australia practically at the express desire of King Edward himself. At an interview which he was accorded by His Majesty soon after his appointment, the King asked :

“When were you last in Australia?”

“I have never been there, Sir.”

“What!” cried the King, “never been there! And now you are going as Governor of New South Wales?”

“Yes, Sir, and I am glad, for I can go out there with an open and unprejudiced mind and draw my own conclusions.”

The reply seems to have pleased His Majesty, and he expressed the hope that Sir Harry would continue to wear his naval uniform on every occasion of ceremony.

And so the Admiral set forth on his mission to the other side of the globe to govern a people he had never seen.

The party, consisting of Sir Harry and his wife, their daughter Alice and younger son Wyatt, left England on April 9. The route chosen was via New York, San Francisco, and Honolulu, and they arrived in Sydney on May 26.

That they received a warm welcome goes without saying. Since the resignation of the previous Governor—in April, 1901—the duties of the

Governor had been performed by Sir Frederick Darley, the Lieutenant-Governor.

On the day following his arrival in the State Sir Harry was sworn in, and took the oath of office. The State of which he was appointed Governor comprised an area of over three hundred thousand square miles, with a population of a million and a half. Some eighteen months prior to his arrival the formal inauguration of the Commonwealth had taken place. In the Commonwealth Legislature the Crown is represented by the Governor-General, there being two elective chambers—the Senate and the House of Representatives.

In the State of New South Wales itself the principles of representative government prevail. Equal privileges are bestowed on all citizens by an extensive franchise, and individual liberty is freely maintained.

As the representative of the Crown the Governor had the power to withhold his assent to Acts of Parliament, pending reference to the Imperial Government. He could summon his own Executive Council (corresponding to the Cabinet), appoint Judges, Justices of the Peace, Commissioners, and other officers, and remove these officials from their posts. He might appoint members of the Upper House, and summon, prorogue, or dissolve any Parliament.

Though usually guided by the advice of the Executive Council, he could, in special circum-

stances, act on his own discretion, especially with regard to the dissolution of Parliament.

Yet though nominally the possessor of wide powers, the Governor was in reality the appointed spokesman of the people.

The Legislature, formed principally on the model of the British Parliament, consists of two Houses of Parliament—the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly ; but their enactments are subject to the approval of the Governor. The members of the Legislative Council are nominated by the Governor, under the authority of the Crown. They are appointed for life, and receive no salary, although they are allowed to travel free on the State Railways.

The Legislative Assembly, consisting of ninety members, is elected by the people. Should the Government be defeated in the Assembly, Parliament may be dissolved at the Governor's discretion, but otherwise it exists for three years.

In 1893 the franchise had been remodelled by the introduction of universal manhood suffrage, and the principle of allowing each elector to vote only in one electorate equalized the privileges of citizenship.

Every male adult who had resided for one year continuously in the State was allowed the vote, provided he was a British subject.

One year after Sir Harry's arrival in the country the franchise was extended to women, thus estab-

lishing complete adult suffrage, the most liberal type of representation in the world.

The leader of the Government in the Legislative Assembly forms from among its members a Cabinet of responsible Ministers, who are placed in charge of the various Government departments, and conduct the general business of Parliament. This Cabinet (under the name of the Executive Council) is presided over by the Governor, and should the Government be defeated on an important issue in the Legislative Assembly, the Governor has power to decide whether the House shall be dissolved or a Cabinet formed by a new leader.

Such is, in broad outline, the constitution of the State of New South Wales.*

Called from the command of his beloved ships to govern a growing and progressive State, Sir Harry set himself to his task with characteristic vigour.

His first and chief aim was to win the hearts of the people. With his wife and daughter he toured the State in every direction, making himself acquainted with the people, interesting himself in their business affairs and personal well-being, and bringing home to them the fact that, as Governor of their State, he was no inaccessible personage, but a plain, blunt man, anxious and eager to meet them on their own ground.

The path of a Colonial Governor is usually beset

* For these particulars the writer is indebted to the "New South Wales Year-Book."

with pitfalls for the unwary. Susceptibilities must be carefully guarded, local opinion solicitously weighed, and withal the dignity of the Crown upheld. The post, probably one of the most difficult in the service of the Crown, was adequately filled by Sir Harry Rawson. Perhaps his work was lightened by the attitude of the people with whom he had come to make his home. From the moment when he landed on their shores, to the day he bade them farewell—after seven years' sojourn among them—he held their loyal affection and respect.

Typical of the spirit in which he was received in every quarter whither his duties led him is the "Ode of Welcome" offered to him at one of the numerous meetings he presided over in Sydney. It voices in a characteristic manner the sentiments which his visits inspired on all such occasions :

"We bid thee welcome,
Thou who on Ocean's face
Hast served thy King and race
Nobly and well.
And in thy sojourn here
Thy name has been held dear ;
So let our voices clear
Sing love to thee.

"Sailor and shoreman,
Thou feel'st the sympathy
For all who plough the sea,
And perils face ;

As well for those who strand
Their life's barque in strange land,
And need the helping hand
Of God's sweet grace.

“So let thy name be
Linked with those noble aims
Which world-wide meet the claims
Of human need ;
For man to man can be
In God's way neighbourly,
By Love's reality,
In act and deed.”

F. L. VOLLER.

CHAPTER XIII

Tours in the Colony—Hospitality of the people—Anecdotes—
Advice to girls—And to boys—Promoted to Admiral—An
ardent Freemason—Letter descriptive of New South Wales
—Commonwealth Navy—His wife's illness—Leaves for
England.

IN the course of his many tours into the outlying districts of the State Sir Harry acquired a very extensive knowledge of the country. From the very nature of his office the Governor of a Colony is bound to be more or less a spectator; but, like most spectators, he acquired a considerable insight into the game, and in this way gained a knowledge of the conditions prevalent in the country denied to most people.

The people themselves realized that the time had long since gone by when the office of Governor was reserved for men who, like the hero in the ballad,

“ . . . when all else fails,
Is sent to govern New South Wales.”

Distinction, age, and experience are nowadays demanded and secured; and in the person of Sir Harry Rawson the people of New South Wales found these qualities amply exemplified.

As time went on he found himself in a position which enabled him to proffer advice with an authority which demanded attention, and received it. Everywhere he went he was met with a spontaneous welcome. He was particularly struck with the universal kindness and hospitality so characteristic of the settlers among whom he passed. Along bush roads in the "back blocks," in coaches, trains, and at wayside stations, evidences of this natural, courteous kindliness met him and his wife at every step. He soon discovered that the welfare of the country depended, not so much on the large and populous towns, as on the vast and thinly populated tracts of territory, comprising an area seven times larger than England and Wales.

During his journeys through these "back blocks," parts of which had never before been visited by a Governor, he made for himself a name never to be forgotten by the people of those remote districts.

As one observer succinctly wrote: "His breezy style, his discreet and confidence-inviting manner on many occasions, and the absence of the *Vere de Vere* method of doing business, are traits admirably suited to win the favours of a democratic people."

No discomfort was too great, no function too many for him, even after much hard travelling, and he invariably endeavoured to extend every facility towards those who sought to honour him as the representative of the Sovereign.

His personal influence was frequently shown by the difference in the people's demeanour upon his arrival and on his departure from towns which he visited on his official tours.

His reputation had usually preceded him, and his reception was as a rule as warm as the Admiral could desire ; but if from any shyness or doubt as to how the Governor should be received a coolness or lack of enthusiasm made itself apparent on his arrival, no doubt remained as to the feelings of the people on his departure. This was entirely due to Sir Harry's manly and straightforward simplicity, his human sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men, and his consequent capacity for attracting people and making them feel at home in his company.

"Gentlemen," said one Mayor when proposing the toast of his health—"gentlemen, we have had a good many Governors among us, but we have never had such a hearty, uncouth old sea-dog as Sir Harry !" There could be no mistaking the sincerity and good feeling which prompted so extraordinary a compliment. Perhaps a more studied choice of words would have failed to present so striking and life-like a picture of a man distinguished by his geniality, robustness of character, and sailor-like frankness.

On another occasion, when distributing prizes to University students, a particularly charming young

lady ascended the dais for her prize. The Governor congratulated her and was shaking hands, when an undergraduate among the audience at the back of the hall shouted out, "Kiss her, Harry, kiss her!" The interruption was greeted with peals of laughter, in which none joined more heartily than Sir Harry himself.

His tact on more than one occasion prevented what might have become an unpleasant contre-temps.

At one town which he visited, the local councillors, in accordance with custom, were presented to him by the Mayor. Sir Harry noticed one man standing back and refusing to come forward, whereupon he immediately went up to him, and, grasping the man warmly by the hand, expressed his pleasure at meeting him. The councillor, in a surly tone, replied: "I only hope you will learn to govern better!" Without hesitation, came the response: "With your help I am sure I shall succeed."

In their zeal to do everything possible to insure the Governor an adequate welcome, a natural nervousness may at times have overtaken the local authorities. Yet Sir Harry had the gift of appearing perfectly dignified when, without so much as the ghost of a smile upon his face, he was addressed by some agitated official as "Your Royal Highness."

But some of the places he visited had not aspired

to the dignity of a town council. On the longest journey which he undertook away from the railway—namely, from Broken Hill to Condobolin, the nearest junction east—the Governor's party covered a distance of three hundred miles across the "never-never" land. Here, in the country of great distances, infrequent mails and a monotony of loneliness seldom relieved by the advent of new faces, his visits awakened extraordinary enthusiasm. The inhabitants vied with one another in doing honour to the representative of the King.

At every one of these outlying townships Sir Harry would make a point of visiting the schools of every denomination. His advice to the younger generation of New South Wales was considered of such value that when he left the Colony the Minister for Education sent round a circular to all the schools, containing the Governor's portrait and his farewell message to the school-children.

He had a delightful way of talking to them, and of taking them into his confidence.

"Girls," he would say, "study how to cook, for, depend upon it, very much of the comfort, happiness, health, and economy of home-life depends upon well-cooked food."

Then he would tell them how, when he first entered the Navy, every officer had to go through the whole curriculum of tarring the rigging, washing clothes, scrubbing decks, and mastering everything appertaining to the life of a sailor.

“Thus you girls will find cooking useful when you are looking out for a home of your own.”

And the thousand or so young hopefuls sitting there with upturned faces would beam on His Excellency with the utmost cordiality for his timely advice.

To the boys he would say : “Never say anything you would not like your mother or sisters to hear ; never do anything you would not like your mother or sisters to know of ; and never keep any company of which they would disapprove.”

On August 12, 1903, Sir Harry was promoted Admiral in His Majesty's Fleet, and it was not until five years later that his name was removed from the Active List and his naval career came to an end.

For many years he had been an enthusiastic mason, having been initiated into the Royal Sussex Lodge at Shanghai as far back as 1866. Whilst out in Australia he was elected Grand Master of New South Wales masonry, a position entailing a vast amount of personal work. Apart from the ordinary routine duties, he seldom missed the opportunity of visiting lodges wherever he might be, and very thoroughly carried out the obligations of the Grand Mastership. At a meeting in the Sydney Town Hall, held prior to his departure from the country, and attended by over three thousand masons from all parts of the State, Sir Harry was presented with a magnificent gold cup, in token of

his services in the cause of masonry in his own Colony.

In addition to his other labours, he had an enormous amount of routine work inseparable from the position of Governor. His signature was required many hundreds of times each week, and an entry in his diary frequently appears: "Signed three hundred deeds." Every department sent many papers daily, particularly large consignments arriving from the Land Department, for the Governor's signature was affixed to every transfer of land in the State.

Throughout his life his arrangement of papers and keeping of accounts was notably methodical. He could, at a moment's notice, put his finger on any detail recorded, and though his personal effects were numerous, he knew exactly where everything was. In his room he kept a collection of tools and contrivances for every imaginable purpose, and if any member of his household were at a loss for such appliances, it was usually Sir Harry who came to the rescue.

Once a week during the summer he travelled to Sydney from his country residence to attend the meetings of the Executive Council, returning home on the evening of the same day.

Of the political changes and reforms which occurred during Sir Harry's term of office it is not proposed here to speak. Adopting from the outset

the attitude of a strictly constitutional Governor, he sedulously avoided interfering in the political battles of the day ; but this did not shield him from attacks in the Press whenever some more or less bitter controversy raged. Though tactful and kindly to a degree, he would suffer no derogation of his office, as appeared on a noteworthy occasion when the formality of the Governor's signature was called in question. One of his Ministers having taken certain action before the necessary warrant had received the Governor's signature, Sir Harry vigorously contested the point, and completely gained the day.

But occasions such as this were few and far between. Refraining from taking any part in the political arena, he found that, as time went on, his Ministers of their own accord sought his advice, and before he had been long in the country Sir Harry exercised a very powerful influence over all shades of opinion and over all classes of people. Haply he remembered the counsel of Lord Lytton on another occasion : " Mark and study the idiosyncrasies of the community, for every community has some peculiar to itself. In your public addresses appeal to that which is noblest, for the noblest are generally the most durable, being peculiar to no party."

In a letter which he sent home describing his impressions of the country and the people, he writes :

“I have now been out here for more than a year, and have, I think, got hold of the ropes. At first it was rather difficult to learn, as the thing I saw to be done was to get thoroughly acquainted with the people, and especially the members of Parliament. This I could not do personally, as I am not allowed to attend the House, and so I had to judge the men by reading that very uninteresting book, ‘Hansard’s Parliamentary Proceedings.’ My only personal intercourse being with the Ministers, I know nearly all the leading men by their speeches in the House.

“Throughout the whole State (and I have now travelled with my wife over eleven thousand miles, and visited most of the head centres) I have been much struck with the excessive loyalty to the throne and to the King, the thorough feeling of attachment to Great Britain and the old home, and the strong democratic feeling which will not be driven, but can easily be led. I believe if Great Britain were at war the whole of the Australian Colonies would to a man volunteer their aid.

“The amount of charities—in the shape of hospitals, refuges, rescue homes, missions, and other institutions—is something to be wondered at. The State helps, pound for pound, in nearly all. Last year my wife and I attended nineteen charity balls for hospitals. These balls are annual, and generally bring from two hundred to six hundred pounds to the funds, so they are doing good work.

“The Arbitration Act has done much good and saved many strikes, but it requires a radical overhauling when it has been longer in force.

“The country has immense resources and great potential wealth ; only population and capital are required to develop it most successfully. Though the State has passed through an awful drought, and out of seventy-five million sheep there are now not more than twenty-two million, given two good years, and they say things will again be flourishing. The land possesses wonderfully recuperative powers. Two months ago, on my visit west about Bourke, the place was a desert, not a sign of a blade of grass to be seen. Two days’ rain brought a greenish tinge, and now, although they have grass two feet high everywhere, there is little or no stock to eat it. Such a state of affairs is really heart-breaking ; but the people have enormous pluck and grit, and invariably face their troubles without whining or appealing for help.

“Whereas during the drought in the pastoral districts awful distress and ruination occurred, in other places—notably the Hunter and Northern River districts—the people have since been coining money, West Maitland clearing half a million pounds on lucerne alone. Tenterfield and district have been selling cattle at nine to twelve pounds, which formerly fetched only twenty-eight to thirty-five shillings.

“Dairy-farming in the Berry and Northern River

districts has been booming, and the farmers are now putting by large sums annually. The two Savings Banks in Sydney hold over twelve million pounds, and last year (while I have been out) over another half a million has been deposited in small sums. (I am President of the Savings Bank.) Rain has fallen well all over the State, and now matters are beginning to improve. Looking on the surface, it certainly appears as if the State were in for a boom. The races, theatres, etc., are always well attended, and the ladies' dresses show no sign of the scarcity of dollars.

“My wife, daughter, and myself have had, and are having, a tremendous amount of work in the social line, and we never attend less than three or four functions every day. At the end of the first twelve months out here we had either collectively or individually attended twelve hundred and seventy-two separate functions, many of them at great distances from our home. As I have said, we travel much so as to see things for ourselves, to get to know the people, and to let them know us. One of my trips was to Norfolk Island, which is under my jurisdiction. The Council of Elders had mutinied and resigned in a body, and as I have complete power there, I accepted their resignation, and thereby sold them! I have abrogated their constitution, and am going to give them another, which will enable me to come down on them individually. They want ruling with a firm hand, and I have

advised their being annexed to the Commonwealth. The three things which would make them prosperous—viz., Customs, Post, and Defence—I cannot now deal with; they are in the hands of the Federal Government. I gave the islanders a good wiggling, and told them my orders must be obeyed, whereupon we parted amicably. . . .”

Of the many important matters in which Sir Harry manifested a deep interest, none gave him greater concern than the ultimate formation of a separate Navy for the Commonwealth. As early as the year 1902, together with the then Governor-General, Lord Tennyson, he had appealed to the Admiralty for six locally manned torpedo-boat destroyers. They also applied for a training-ship for boys of good character, which could move from port to port, and thus promote the maritime spirit among the younger generation. Sir Harry urged that there were many serious reasons why Australia should be especially encouraged to develop her own naval defences instead of relying solely on a cash contribution to the Imperial Exchequer.

At that time (1902) the rival schools were sharply divided as to the precise method by which the Commonwealth should secure its own naval defence, one being in favour of a cash contribution, the other desiring Australian naval co-operation, or, in other words, her own Navy. Over twelve years ago a writer in the *Spectator* concisely summed up the case for a separate Australian Navy, and as the scheme

then laid down is identical with that advocated by Sir Harry, a part of it is here reproduced :

“ . . . it will be said, a local Australian Navy will be useless. It would be produced without expert knowledge, the men and officers would not be properly trained, and the Squadron would be kept on shore under the orders of Australian politicians. We see no reason to believe in any such sinister prophecies. No doubt mistakes would be made, but these would be rectified by experience. We do not, of course, suggest that the Australian Navy should be autonomous or isolated. Just as the military forces are placed under a General of experience, so the Australian Navy would be placed under an Imperial Admiral, whose business it would be to carry the traditions of the British Navy into the new Service and to train the officers and crews. But even if the value of a local Australian Navy is admitted, it will be argued that that Australian Squadron should, at any rate, be under the immediate orders of the Imperial Government. So it perhaps ought to be in theory, in order to obtain the maximum of efficiency. In practice it had much better be under the Australian Government. They will pay the bill, and it is quite certain that they will take far more interest in, and spend much more money and trouble on, a force which is their very own. That they would in a time of emergency place it at the disposal of the Imperial Government is quite certain, and it is far better to rely upon such spontaneous help, as in the case of the Army, than to adopt any hard-and-fast rule. . . .

“ We believe that the Australian Navy should be essentially sea-going, and that its ships should be encouraged to take long voyages, and for training purposes should be attached to British squadrons in the Mediterranean and in the Channel. A Navy's first business is ubiquity, and Australia, like the rest of the Empire, can only be effectively defended on the blue water.

“ But we have not the slightest fear of Australian statesmen not learning this lesson. As soon as an Australian Navy is created, the Anglo-Saxon sailors' desire to get to distant seas will be sure to assert itself. We see little or no danger of an Australian Navy ultimately consisting of coast-defence monitors, only capable of pottering about Home waters. As to the vexed questions of coal capacity, speed, gun-fire, etc., we shall not attempt to pronounce any opinion. All we want to insist on is that the ships must be essentially sea-going vessels. Australia, if she adopts the plan of a local Navy, will, of course, have to work slowly. A fleet cannot be built in a day, but we see no reason why in the course of the next ten years she might not have a fairly formidable squadron, a considerable number of officers, and besides the seamen and marines actually employed, a large reserve of men.”

Such were the conclusions drawn by this eminently prophetic writer over twelve years ago, and cordially endorsed by Sir Harry. The description here given of a possible local Navy for Australia, coincides to a remarkable degree with the Commonwealth Fleet as we find it to-day.

Though Sir Harry did not live long enough to see Australia's Navy materialize into the fine fleet unit which it is to-day, he lived to see the first impetus given to the formation of an independent Australian Navy, and the realization of his own ideals.

In his public speeches Sir Harry always succeeded in gaining the attention and enlisting the sympathies of his hearers. He prepared his subjects carefully, arranged his notes methodically and logically, and delivered his speeches textually correct throughout. His capacity for committing to memory and correctly reproducing large numbers of statistics and figures was little short of marvellous. His speeches always contained an element of humour, and he would address an agricultural audience on their own subject with some amusing reference to his own ignorance of the matter.

Early in 1905 the health of Lady Rawson began to give cause for anxiety. Of late frequent heart-attacks had left her prostrated, and in her desire to emulate the untiring energy of her husband, she overtaxed her strength to an extent which left her ill-prepared to face a serious illness. The news of the breakdown in her health was received throughout the State with the greatest sorrow. During the years that she had spent by her husband's side, sharing his work, Lady Rawson had won for herself a unique position in the hearts of the women of New South Wales, and she shared with Sir Harry in the real affection with which they had both been

regarded since their arrival in the country three years previously.

During all that time she had been an unflagging worker, and a great many institutions—religious, philanthropic, and social—lost a good friend when she left New South Wales, alas! never to return.

Accompanied by her daughter and constant companion, Alice, and younger son, Wyatt, Lady Rawson sailed for England in March, 1905. It was hoped that the sea-air, combined with the best medical advice at home, would restore her to health, and indeed for some time after her arrival in England considerable improvement was effected and maintained. Reassuring reports from home helped in some measure to allay Sir Harry's anxiety, but towards the middle of June the receipt of a less favourable cablegram confirmed his half-formed decision to hasten to his wife's side.

He applied for, and was granted, five months' leave of absence from the State. His own health was none too good, and he really needed a respite from the cares of office. The cheerful and patient way in which he endured the sufferings caused by arthritis of the hip was an object-lesson to all who were aware of it. At one time he said that he was not free from pain for more than ten minutes during the whole of his waking day, and was often prevented from sleeping at night. His journeys by buggy and motor-car caused him considerable pain, which he bore with a smiling face.

When he left Sydney to hasten to his wife, he took with him the sympathy and love of the whole of the Colony. In a leading article, entitled "A Good Governor," a Sydney newspaper thus voiced the feelings of the people :

"The unfortunate circumstances which compel the Governor to leave for England, at what may be literally called a moment's notice, are of the kind which evoke public sympathy in the highest degree. That Sir Harry may find when he arrives in England that Lady Rawson has made a fair recovery, and that they both may again as speedily as possible live among us in Sydney, is the wish of everybody in the community, to whom, for some three years past, Sir Harry has represented his Sovereign. But in the present case, so 'popular' in the best and truest sense of the word has been the good old British Admiral who is now our Governor, that the sympathy in his case is of a peculiarly deep and thorough nature. There have been 'popular' Governors of New South Wales before now, and it is without any disparagement to them that we use the word so readily in Sir Harry Rawson's case.

"Indeed, with him there is a real sense of something like affection from the people of New South Wales which justified the use just now of the word 'old' as applied to him, the word having reference less to the length of his years than to the manner in which he has found his way into the hearts of the people. As we all know, the British, who use their language in a despotic manner, have made the word

'old' as applicable to anyone they take into their favour synonymous with an expression of the most genuine and friendly feeling. Our Governor takes with him the warmest of wishes from those to whom his period of office has endeared him as a man, apart from the respect which he has obtained by his administration of that office.

"And here there may be taken a permission to comment on the fact that the British Navy has been remarkable for the production of men in high command who were not only proved as to capability as to service on shipboard, but showed themselves to be possessed of all those qualities which distinguish men in the most exigent positions, apart from the actual fulfilment of their professional duties.

"There is something about the naval man who has risen by merit to command which makes him distinct from the occupants of other public positions. These latter, too often, when taken from the exact groove or specialization in which their work has been conducted, show themselves, to use a nautical expression, very much at sea in connection with affairs which do not lie within their ordinary professional training.

"But it is remarkable how often the Captain of a British man-o'-war is placed in a position where he represents the might and majesty and the foreign relations of his country, on what is popularly known as 'his own,' under most difficult conditions. And the instances are innumerable where something like the best diplomatic skill and the most effective powers of resourcefulness have been displayed by Captains of British men-o'-war placed in circum-

stances which under other conditions would occupy Cabinet Ministers and departments much time in settlement. And let it be remembered that, in many of the cases mentioned, a false step on the part of the man who had the honour as well as the material interest of his country in his hands might have precipitated a war or caused a national humiliation to his flag.

“Some of the resourcefulness in difficult positions which distinguishes its high officers marks the Navy man from the lowest rung of the ladder upwards. And it is to this resourcefulness, encouraged if not engendered by the very environments of their professional life, that we owe the remarkable distinction which British men-o’-war’s-men, from the able seaman to the Admiral, have attained in fighting on land. The war history of Great Britain is full of instances in which naval brigades and their officers have displayed on land a knowledge of strategy and tactics too often among the real land forces limited to a few.

“That Sir Harry, after a distinguished professional career, should have shown great capacity, all the greater because not paraded, not only in filling his social duties, but in discharging such official responsibilities as are entailed upon him under the constitution, is a proof of his possession of those high qualities of which mention has been made. Furthermore, without pretending to eloquence, and while, when necessary, giving his opinions on certain social questions with remarkable and admirable directness, all Sir Harry’s public utterances have had a distinction conferred by their sound common sense and palpable

honesty, accompanied by what may be called that best of tact, the tact of simplicity.

“Our Governor, as the pulsating engines drive his steamer homeward bound, may be assured that the public pulse of New South Wales beats hopefully for his future.”

CHAPTER XIV

Illness and death of Lady Rawson—Returns to New South Wales—His daily life—His expenses—Becomes a G.C.B.—Marriage of his son—Term of office extended—Visit of the U.S.A. fleet—Leaves New South Wales—Exciting experience—Arrives home—Audience with the King—Becomes a G.C.M.G.—His death—Funeral ceremony.

SIR HARRY arrived in England on July 11, and at once proceeded to Wrexham, where his wife and daughter were staying. He writes to a friend: "I found my wife much better than she was when they telegraphed for me. Directly she heard I was on my way home she began to turn over a new leaf, and now that I am with her I hope that she may steadily recover. We are keeping her very quiet, and hope to come out in the 'Orontes,' leaving early in October. I came straight here on arrival in England, but as soon as I can leave my wife, I shall go to London to see the Secretary of State and also to ask for an audience with the King."

Unfortunately, the improvement in Lady Rawson's health was not maintained, and for the next few weeks she lay at death's door. For Sir Harry it proved to be the most anxious time of his life, hope alternating with despair, and he scarce dared permit himself a moment from her side. Of his patient

devotion and touching tenderness to his wife during her last illness no words can tell. As the weeks passed, and he began to feel that she was slipping from his grasp, the bluff old sailor's heart sank within him.

"If Thou shouldst ask me to resign
What most I prize. . . ."

The words came home to him pregnant with dread possibilities. Again he writes: "We have been in most awful anxiety. Last Monday evening my wife had a sudden relapse. Her heart nearly stopped beating and the pulse was scarcely to be felt. For a long time I thought it was the end, but, thank God! at last she revived, and now seems to be a little better. I have had to cancel our passages in the 'Orontes,' but if this slight improvement is kept up, we shall leave in the 'Ormuz' in November. . . . The anxiety has been so great that I have not had the heart to write any letters, being unable to settle to anything during such a terrible time."

Later he writes: "We are looking forward to being at sea this day fortnight, and I hope the sea-air will help to pull her round. If she can be moved, the doctors wish her to go in the 'Ormuz,' as she is just longing for the sea-air, and so eager to be out in Australia again."

This slight improvement, barely maintained, gave hopes for Lady Rawson's ultimate return to New South Wales. Accordingly, on November 17, accom-

panied by her husband and family, she was carried on board the Orient liner at Tilbury, and the last of her many voyages commenced.

At first the sea-air seemed to instil new life into her ; but this proved to be but a temporary respite, and as the ship approached the Red Sea, with its oppressive heat, her strength slowly ebbed.

On December 2, soon after leaving Suez, all hope was abandoned, for it was seen that the end was not far off. At ten minutes to eight on the morning of Advent Sunday, surrounded by all those she held most dear, Lady Rawson passed peacefully away.

To Sir Harry the blow was irreparable. In a letter to a friend, when all was over, he says : "Thank you for your most sympathetic and affectionate letter to me in our terrible loss. It is beyond me yet to realize I shall have no loving voice to welcome me ; but God has been very good in sparing her to me for thirty-four years, and in the end taking her so quietly and peacefully. There was no struggle or pain at the end—she just breathed slower and slower, and afterwards looked so beautiful and calm. We could not wish anything changed.

"She rests in a grand sepulchre—the sea she always loved so well—wrapped in a Union Jack, with four hundred fathoms of clear blue ocean around her."

Crushed and heart-broken, Sir Harry returned to

New South Wales, once again to take up his work there.

Those who know of his tender and lover-like devotion to his wife throughout the long span of their married life will appreciate the sacrifice he voluntarily made in resuming his duties in the Colony at her wish—a wish dictated by a last desire for her husband's welfare in his career.

There can be no doubt that it was Lady Rawson's devotion to her duties, as the wife of the Governor, which so tried her as to make her less able to withstand the illness which ended in her death.

Sir Harry felt this to be the case, but he never expressed any regret that might lead one to suppose that he thought the sacrifice too great. On the contrary, he bore his cross with a courage and fortitude worthy of the man, which cannot but compel admiration.

For years the inseparable companion of her parents, his daughter Alice now helped in a very large degree to fill the blank caused by the death of her mother. A true helpmate, she turned with increased devotion to her father, and carried on with signal success Lady Rawson's work in the State. Never had man better solace in his bereavement, and never did daughter more ably fill her mother's place.

After his wife's death Sir Harry seemed to prefer the quiet and peace of his country home at Hill View, Sutton Forest, some eighty miles from Sydney.

Here he could enjoy a well-earned respite from the many functions and ceremonies which occupied very nearly all his time, and here he could cease to be a Governor, and become, as he would say, a country gentleman.

A keen supporter of all forms of sport, he regularly attended the race-meetings and football matches, and seldom missed a cricket match of any importance. Cups and trophies bearing his name are to be found to-day distributed all over New South Wales, and there was no club or association promoting sport of any description which did not receive his support. The arthritis in his hip prevented him from taking any active exercise, but he delighted in taking long drives about the surrounding country, and spent many hours at clay-pigeon shooting in the grounds surrounding his home.

One of his most pleasant experiences was a week's duck-shooting in Queensland as the guest of his friend Lord Chelmsford, the Governor, who afterwards succeeded him in New South Wales.

Indoors his time was fully taken up by his extensive correspondence, the arrangement of his papers, and his private accounts. Every evening the official documents requiring his signature for the following day would arrive, and these were all signed the next morning and returned to Sydney by the midday train. The number of papers which had to be signed daily amounted to a heavy tax upon his time, but he would never resort to a

stamp or other mechanical means of attaching his signature.

With the members of the Executive Council he invariably remained upon the best of terms. Among the Ministers there was a genuine feeling of regret that the Governor's salary had been reduced.*

They endeavoured to compensate for this in many ways, which either lightened the calls on his purse or added enjoyment to his everyday life. His travelling was done in the greatest comfort which the resources of the country and its Ministers could provide, Sir Harry being greatly touched by this additional proof of the personal affection and regard which the Executive Council showed for him.

It was the express wish of King Edward himself that the Governor should endeavour by all possible means to live within the income provided by the State; but Sir Harry found this a difficult task and the many calls on his purse made by charitable and other institutions were largely met from his private resources, though few were aware of the fact. To the poor and needy he and his daughter were mainly known by constant acts of unobtrusive kindness and charity, of which only the recipients possessed the secret.

He had a special admiration for the work of the Salvation Army in the poorer quarters of Sydney, and his keen interest in their work was so appreciated by the Salvationists that they were wont

* In 1902, from £7,000 to £5,000.

to hail him at their meetings, to his great amusement, as their future "General."

To the Missions to Seamen in Sydney Sir Harry was a valued friend, and as a memorial of his Governorship a new institute was raised, which now bears his name.

As a host he was genial and kind to all, dignified without stiffness, and courteous without condescension. When the occasion called for it, he could rebuke with severity; but generally his judicial manner was softened by his evident kindness and consideration towards all those in trouble or distress, whilst his generous hospitality found an echo in the hearts of the generous people among whom he dwelt. Dinners and garden-parties at Government House during Sir Harry's régime were regarded with the most pleasurable anticipation. A fund of good stories and a ready wit augmented his good qualities as a host. Importuned by a guest, who sat next to him at dinner, for his exact conception of the terms "heaven" and "hell," he replied: "I am unable to answer that question until I know whether you are in quest of climate or company."

Careful to see that during the year no one with a claim was omitted from the invitations to Government House, he would never allow anyone temporarily resident in the country to be invited unless possessed of a letter of introduction to him,

thus insuring priority to the people of the State themselves.

In his own household he inspired a feeling of the most intense loyalty and affection, and used to remark on his good fortune in having such a "happy family" around him. Christmas-time was always observed in a good, old-fashioned manner, and nobody in any way connected with him was forgotten on that occasion.

Nearly every Sunday morning he would attend service at the Cathedral, and he would also delight in driving along the cliffs to the service at a tiny church nestling in Watson's Bay, overlooking the deep waters of the harbour. Though himself a strict adherent of the Church of England, he made a point of pursuing a broad policy of non-sectarianism in his official capacity. Indeed, among the many services which he rendered to the Colony, perhaps the greatest was the persistence with which he endeavoured to remove the blight of sectarianism which overhung the State. In using his high office and ripe experience to eradicate religious strife as far as possible, Sir Harry took upon himself a task that few men would voluntarily undertake. With no axe to grind, no private interest to serve, he could have but one desire—the good and welfare of the State.

Though advancing in years, and suffering from a painful and chronic complaint, he did not spare himself. By travelling forty-seven thousand miles

and making himself personally acquainted with every portion of the Colony, by seeking the society of experienced men and women who commanded the respect and confidence of their fellows, by long conversations with distinguished statesmen and old-established colonists, and, finally, by a close study of the conditions obtaining in the State, he sought to do his duty towards New South Wales.

A happy tribute to his services in the cause of the Empire was found in his inclusion in the Birthday Honours in June, 1906, when he was nominated to a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath.

In April of the following year his eldest son, then a Lieutenant in the Navy on the Australian Station, was married to Miss Dorothy Mitchell, of Sydney. In part owing to the popularity of the bridegroom's father, an enormous crowd gathered in the vicinity of the Cathedral, where the ceremony took place; and gifts and good wishes were showered on the young couple by all classes of the community.

Sir Harry's younger son, Wyatt—who, to his father's great disappointment, had failed to pass the sight-test for the Navy—was at this time engaged in studying at Sydney University, and Miss Rawson, while ever ready to promote the welfare of her sex, was constantly employed in assisting her father in all that appertained to his public and private life.

And so, as the years of his Governorship passed

by, Sir Harry and his family found themselves endeared more and more to the people among whom they had made their dwelling.

No surprise could therefore be manifested when, at the end of six years' term of office, the people, through their representatives, begged the Crown to extend the term for yet another year; and this final proof of the people's affection proved a source of the greatest gratification to Sir Harry and his daughter.

In August, 1908, there occurred an important international event in the history of the Commonwealth. This was the visit of the United States fleet, which aroused extraordinary interest and enthusiasm in New South Wales and Victoria, and, indeed, all over the continent. The fleet remained for one week in Sydney Harbour, and during that time the whole city was given up to a round of festivities and joyous gaiety. As Governor of the State Sir Harry took a prominent part in the magnificent welcome accorded to the visitors; and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that, on this occasion, the people of New South Wales beat even their own record in the generous and hospitable welcome which they gave to their kinsmen from overseas.

As the time drew near for Sir Harry's departure from the State that he had served and loved so well, a feeling of very genuine regret made itself apparent amongst all classes.

One Sydney paper voiced the feeling of the people in words which may well be set down here :

“Governors come and Governors go, but never was the coming of a Governor so fraught with such buoyant hopes, so full of so much good in its duration, or so poignant in its regret at the going, as that of the gallant sailor, Sir Harry Rawson.

“Clever men have come and gone, without having opportunity for doing aught for or amongst us. Sir Harry did not wait for opportunity ; he sought it, and its name was legion.

“In every town in this State his face and cheery word are familiar pleasures ; he sought to know us, and we soon came to know and love him. He was all the time in our homes, and he took Government House everywhere for folks to see, not shutting its doors as if it were a rare show for the select few.

“Merit had its welcome at his board ; even the student who distinguished himself at college or University was in his dinner-list. Every institution, especially for the alleviation of distress of mind, body, or estate, had his hearty encouragement and financial support. As the President of the Yorkshire Society has said, Sir Harry, during his seven years of office, had ‘one hand on the throne, the other on the people.’ There have been Governors who, as men, were the thinnest of shadows. The Governor in them was so much in evidence that the man was completely hidden ; but no one will say this of Sir Harry Rawson. He carried the dignity

of his high office well—so well that it enhanced him ; but he carried it—it did not carry him. Such men do more to bind us to the throne than forty fleets. Gentleness with strength, kindness, courtesy, and patience. Whatever we may have expected, this is what we found, for we have looked on the face of a man.

“When the great shadow of his life fell upon him, the whole State mourned with him. That dear companion of his younger days, the true mate of his maturer years, the helper in everything connected with his public life, was taken at the zenith of her usefulness. Wherever women wanted her, and wherever sympathy or imperial unity called her, there was Lady Rawson—doughty dame of valiant knight.

“Every combination of men and women has given tangible proof of respect and love for the Governor and his daughter. Freemasons, women of Sydney, sturdy Yorkshire men and women, commercial and social institutions, the Hibernians (lauding his absolute fairness in all that he did)—all have crowded their appreciation and gifts upon him. Wherever he went he breathed and gave new birth to the spirit of loyalty to the throne, showing us that, but for the exigencies of travel and circumstance, we were all Britons, subjects of one King, and fighting under one flag.

“That is the lesson he has taught us ; and so our hearts’ best wishes and our earnest prayers will follow Harry Rawson and his kindly sons and daughter all their lives, and with one hearty shout we call ‘Come back.’”

And so the day dawned when Sir Harry and his family were to bid farewell to the people of New South Wales.

Escorted by a squadron of New South Wales Lancers, and wearing his naval uniform, the old Admiral, with his son and daughter beside him, passed on his last drive through the streets of Sydney. The city, with its beautifully decorated streets, crowded with the people for whom he had so often proclaimed his affection, made a picture calculated to live long in his memory. From the Town Hall to the Circular Quay, where an enormous assembly was gathered, the cheering was terrific in volume. With tears in his eyes the Governor saluted the people of whom he had been the idol for so long.

And now the last good-byes are said, and as the steamer swings slowly out into the stream, a hoarse roar of cheers rises from many thousands of throats. That is the last scene as he leaves the land where he had spent nearly seven happy years.

Speaking of his departure, the *Sydney Morning Herald* said :

“Everyone has recognized the qualities of unassuming good-will, tact, and honesty of purpose that have made Sir Harry Rawson’s period of office so successful.

“No section of the community does not recall some special occasion when his kindly help and interest have been forthcoming, and perhaps in no

direction was his good influence better felt than in the many visits he paid to the schools of the State."

In his diary he records the day :

" *Wednesday, March 24.*—Our last day. Good-bye to all at the House. Then, with an escort of Lancers, down to the ship. Farewell arches and crowds along the route. Windows full of people all cheering. At the ship a guard of bluejackets and my regiment (2nd Australian Infantry) drawn up. Inspected them ; immense crowds all around continually cheering. Reception on board. At noon, cast off from wharf. Salutes from both ships and shore. Escorted by crowded steamers to the Heads. Cleared the harbour at one o'clock and changed out of uniform. Very tired. Last glimpses of N.S.W. Good-bye, good-bye."

From Sydney, the party travelled home via Japan and Canada. At Tokio Sir Harry was the guest of the British Ambassador for some days, and whilst there he had an audience of the Emperor. Here also he made the acquaintance of Admiral Togo, Field-Marshal Oyama, and the Marquis Ito.

From Japan the party proceeded by way of Vancouver, across Canada to Fort William, where they embarked in the steamer for Toronto. Whilst passing through the Sault Ste. Marie Lock an exciting, if somewhat dangerous, experience befell them.

From the accounts, it appears that the " Assini-

boia," the steamer in which they were travelling, was made fast to the side of the lock, which here connects Lake Superior with Lake Huron. The lock gates ahead of them remained closed, whilst those behind were open. Some distance astern of the "Assiniboia," and outside the lock, was another steamer, the "Crescent City," awaiting her turn to pass through. Both these vessels had been made fast some time previously, when about 2 p.m. another steamer, the "Walker," was observed coming up to the lock gates from the other direction.

Through some mistaken order this vessel suddenly rammed the lock gates at full speed, which at once gave way under the impact, and in a moment the waters of Lake Superior were pouring through the lock, the drop in the level here being about eighteen feet.

Sir Harry, who was standing in the bows of the "Assiniboia" at the time, in describing afterwards what then happened, said :

"Our hawsers which held us to the lock side parted like threads. As the gates ahead of us gave way, we shot forward, the bows going down over the incline until the stern was high in the air. In front of us the 'Walker' was spinning round in the centre of the channel, but, fortunately for us, as we swept down on to her, at fifteen or sixteen knots, she turned bow on to the bank, and beyond a glancing blow on our quarter, neither of us was much damaged. Meanwhile the enormous rush of

water had carried away the moorings of the 'Crescent City,' and she came flying down behind us on the crest of a wave. She stopped short on the sill of the lock for a second, and then tore loose and came crashing into us, and then into the 'Walker.' Had she struck us or the 'Walker' on our bows, she would have been cut through, and nothing could have saved her; or had the 'Walker' crossed the channel and the 'Assiniboia' and 'Crescent City' piled into her, there would have been a frightful wreck. We were crowded with passengers, and hardly a soul could have escaped. It was all over in less than a minute, and after we had been carried on a few hundred yards, all three vessels grounded. They were all very badly damaged, and I don't think anything of the kind has ever occurred before."

Sir Harry and his family arrived home without further mishap, and he proceeded on a round of visits to his relatives and friends. Very shortly after his arrival home he was accorded an audience by King Edward, and he has left on record an account of the interview which then took place.

"When the King came into the room, he shook hands and said: 'Glad to see you, Rawson. Why, you are thinner than you were; sit down.'

"I said: 'I don't know, Sir; my sword-belt is out at the last hole.'

"Directly we sat down he said: 'Well, Rawson, I must tell you at once that you are the most

popular Governor that has ever been in Australia. You have done splendidly, and somehow got everyone devoted to you.'

"I thanked him for his good opinion and said I had only done my duty, and if he was satisfied, I was honoured. I told him of the loyalty of the people of New South Wales, and the many messages I had to give from the people, of loyalty to the throne and love for the Old Country.

"Then the King said : 'What are you going to do now ?'

"I replied : 'If your Majesty has any work for me to do, I shall feel it an honour, and am at your Majesty's orders.'

"I then told him how I had carried out his commands in wearing my naval uniform up country at all functions, that I had travelled over forty-seven thousand miles in the State, and had carried out his orders as regarded keeping expenses within my pay.

"The King then said he was afraid I was too late for a levee, and went on to tell me how much he felt for me in my sad bereavement, and that his niece had been on the 'Ormuz' and had told him all about it.

"I thanked him and said it was indeed a terrible loss to me, but that my daughter had taken her mother's place and had done so well, with which His Majesty agreed.

"He then said he was very glad to have seen me, and said : 'Mind you go and see the Prince of Wales.'

“I congratulated him on winning the Derby, and after that he shook hands and the interview terminated.”

In November, 1909, a further honour was paid to Sir Harry by his nomination to a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. The Marquis of Crewe, Colonial Secretary, in acquainting him with the intelligence, said :

“I had great pleasure in submitting your name to His Majesty for a G.C.M.G.

“May I congratulate you on this recognition of your eminently successful term of government in New South Wales?

“I have heard on all hands how greatly you were respected, and I feel sure that this new honour will give the most widespread satisfaction in Australia.”

In acknowledging the honour, Sir Harry wrote: “I am ready to take up any appointment in the service of the Crown”; but, indeed, it was high time for him to relinquish the onerous duties of office. He was now sixty-six years of age, and his health was none too good. With increasing years the arthritis in his hip caused him greater pain than ever, and it was now only with the greatest difficulty that he could get about.

However, he still kept up his interest in Australian and naval matters, and presided at or attended many a committee meeting in aid of some charitable institution.

His last public service was as President of the

Committee for interviewing Candidates for Entry into the Royal Navy, and his last public appearance was at the banquet at the Royal Naval Club on Trafalgar Day, at which he presided and made an exceedingly good speech.

Towards the end of October, 1910, an internal malady took the form of appendicitis, with complications, against which a very severe operation proved of no avail. To the inexpressible grief of the many who loved him, and within two days of completing his sixty-seventh year, Sir Harry Rawson passed away, in London, on November 3, 1910.

His remains were interred in Bracknell Parish Churchyard on Tuesday, November 8, the coffin being drawn from Ramslade, his brother-in-law's estate, by a detachment of bluejackets on a gun-carriage.

On it, covered by the Union Jack, lay his cocked hat and sword, and on the conclusion of the impressive ceremony the Last Post was sounded.

His Majesty was represented at the funeral by Sir Charles Cust, and a large gathering of naval and Australian friends present testified to the esteem and affection in which the deceased Admiral was held.

Simultaneously with the interment at Bracknell a memorial service was held at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and attended by a large number of relatives and friends.

Admiral of the Fleet, Lord John Hay, under whom Sir Harry served for many years as Flag-captain in

the Channel and Mediterranean Squadrons, in a letter to the writer, says of Sir Harry :

“There has been no distinguished man of the latter half of the last and of the present century whose life is more interesting and more deserving of commemoration than the subject of your Memoir.

“He was a great sailor and a successful disciplinarian, of the sort that shows the soft hand and the iron will.

“He had a charm of manner which won for him the friendship of all with whom he came in contact, no matter in what walk of life they might be placed.

“He handled fleets with a nerve and a success that has never been surpassed in our day.

“When civil life claimed him, he displayed an ability which will be borne witness to by thousands in New South Wales, who grieved at the close of his long Governorship.

“I, who knew him well, and under whom he served as Flag-Captain for many years, and in that capacity showed himself to be the best I have ever seen, felt that his premature death meant the loss of one of the greatest friends I have had during what has now become a very long life.”

In commenting on his death, the *Times* said :

“His ripe experience, his many sterling qualities, and genial presence, will cause the news of his death to be received with more than regret by a very wide circle of friends.”

So, his work done, let us not lament him who died so full of honour and so well beloved by all. He has left us a name and an ensample—a name which is honoured and revered by all who knew him, and an ensample of a Christian hero, whose life was spent in the service of his God, his Sovereign, and his country.

A bronze memorial tablet has recently been unveiled in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral to his memory, and there is a stained-glass window in the chapel at Greenwich to remind future generations of one who was a man of honour, a gallant and excellent seaman, and a brave and generous soul.

“This is the happy warrior—this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.”

CHAPTER XV

Birth of Wyatt Rawson—Early life—Enters the Royal Navy—
Ashantee War—Arctic exploration—Death of Petersen—
Polar discoveries—Return of expedition—Married—Outbreak
of Egyptian War—Preparations for attack on Tel-el-Kebir—
The night march—Mortally wounded—Death and burial—
Conclusion.

No narrative of the life of Sir Harry Rawson would be properly complete without some account of his perhaps no less famous brother, Wyatt Rawson.

Endowed with many of the qualities which so strongly characterized his elder brother, and with all the prospects of a brilliant career before him, his life was tragically cut short at the early age of twenty-nine. Born on August 17, 1853, he passed some of his early years in Canada, where his father held an official position, and it was whilst there that he gained some of his boyish experience of sledging which was to stand him in such good stead afterwards. He entered the Navy in 1866, and enjoyed the great advantage of serving his apprenticeship under Captain J. G. Goodenough in the "Minotaur," the ship which was afterwards commanded by his brother Harry.

Later he joined the "Narcissus" (Captain Codrington), one of the ships forming the celebrated

flying squadron under Admiral Phipps Hornby which made the voyage round the world. On his return Rawson passed for Lieutenant with credit, and when the Ashantee War broke out he was attached to the "Active" (Commodore Hewett), and distinguished himself in the march on Kumassi with the naval brigade, receiving a bullet-wound in the thigh at the Battle of Amoafu in January, 1874. He was mentioned in despatches for the energy and tact he displayed, and was specially promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on March 31, 1874, at the age of twenty.

When it was decided that Arctic exploration should be resumed through Government agency, both Wyatt and his brother, then Commander Rawson, were among the foremost and most eager of the volunteers; and although his brother was unsuccessful, Wyatt Rawson was appointed Third Lieutenant of the "Discovery" in April, 1875. Among other officers who were appointed to this expedition was the present Admiral of the Fleet, Sir William May.

Two powerful steamers, the "Alert" and "Discovery," were selected for the service, and the command of the whole placed in the hands of Sir George Nares, with Commander A. H. Markham, who had made a cruise in a whaler up Baffin's Bay and Barrow Strait the previous year, as second in command of the "Alert." Captain H. F. Stephenson commanded the "Discovery." The primary

object of the expedition was to attain, if possible, the highest northern latitude and even the Pole itself, and to explore the adjacent coastlines within reach of the travelling parties. The limits of the exploring parties were fixed between 90° and 20° west longitude.

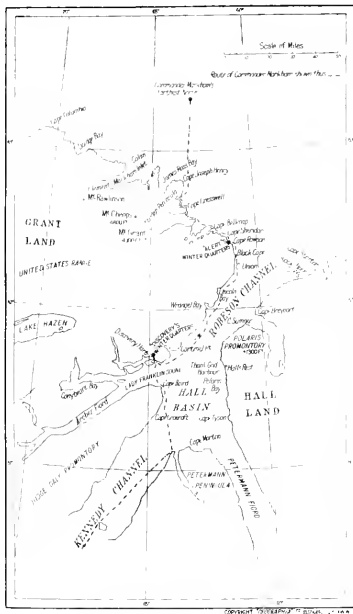
The expedition set sail from Portsmouth on May 29, 1875, and entered Smith Sound in the last days of July. After much difficulty with the ice, Lady Franklin Bay in $81^{\circ} 44'$ N. was reached, and here the "Discovery" was established in winter quarters. Sir George Nares in the "Alert" pushed on northwards, and reached the edge of the heavy ice, which he named the "palæocrystic sea," the ice-floes being from eighty to one hundred feet thick. When the "Discovery" was left at Lady Franklin Bay, it was arranged that an officer from her should be taken on board the "Alert," to return to the "Discovery" as soon as practicable with news of the final wintering-place of her consort. Rawson was selected for this important service, and he accordingly joined the "Alert" with a sledge crew on August 26. The "Alert" finally reached her winter quarters off the open coast, facing the great winter pack stretching away to the northward, in $82^{\circ} 27'$ N. Autumn travelling parties were despatched from the vessel in September and October to lay depôts, and between October 2 and 12 Rawson made a persevering effort to reach the "Discovery," but failed in the attempt. He succeeded in reaching a promi-

ment headland some miles to the southward, which was afterwards named Cape Rawson; but the attempt to reach the "Discovery" had to be abandoned, and Rawson and his sledge party were compelled to remain with the "Alert" until the spring set in. His shipmates found him a great acquisition, and his cheery, helpful companionship helped to pass the hours of darkness. An Arctic winter loses all its horrors when the long days (or rather nights) are cheered and brightened by the joyous gaiety and devotion of such spirits as Rawson and his young comrades. One little instance will serve to show Rawson's light-heartedness and *joie-de-vivre*.

Sir George Nares, with Rawson and a party of four men, had been out on an excursion, and on their return to the ship were descending a steep slope of hard snow, when his companions were startled to see Rawson suddenly shoot down, head first, for a distance of at least a hundred yards. However, Sir George Nares and the rest of the party quickly recovered their equanimity, when they reflected that it was (as they supposed) only a sample of his usual fun and a quick and easy method of descent. In reality Rawson had lost his footing and slipped badly, but had the presence of mind to steer himself, and so he landed in soft snow, whence he got up unhurt, and, to his chagrin, found his companions laughing heartily.

The first service to be performed on the return of the sun was one of no slight difficulty. It was to





MAP OF THE ARCTIC REGIONS

open up communication between the "Alert" and "Discovery" during a time when the mean temperature was 30° , and the minimum 45° , below zero.

The heroes of this memorable exploit were Sub-Lieutenant Egerton and Rawson, who were accompanied by the Danish dog-driver Petersen and nine dogs. Starting on March 12, 1876, Petersen was very soon frost-bitten, and on the fourteenth a heavy gale made it impossible to travel. Petersen became very ill, and was nearly frozen to death. His two companions dug a hole in the snow-drift and removed him into it. This took them six hours, but the sufferer was still in acute pain, and there seemed to be no heat in his body at all. They chafed his hands and feet, and in their endeavour to keep him warm, deprived themselves even of some of their own clothing. But even when they had closed every crevice and lit the spirit-lamp, they only succeeded in getting the temperature up to 7° . Still the patient's hands and feet remained hard and frozen, "so, each taking a foot, we set to work to warm them with our hands and flannels. As each hand got cold we warmed it about our persons, and in two hours we restored the circulation." This was repeated again and again throughout the night, and next day they resolved to attempt to bring the man back to the ship. The difficulties and miseries of the return journey were increased by the incessant care required for Petersen. At one point the dogs made a sudden bolt past Rawson, who held on to

the harness and was carried along with them. On his grip depended poor Petersen's life, but it was a grip of iron.

At 6.30 the same evening they arrived alongside the "Alert," and so their comrade's life was saved, at least for the time being.

They were received with heartfelt rejoicing, and Admiral Sir A. H. Markham has recorded the feelings of all Englishmen as to their conduct under such trying circumstances. "The work of these two young officers in saving Petersen's life at the risk of their own stands out conspicuously among the many deeds of devotion with which the annals of Arctic adventure abound."

Sir George Nares himself wrote: "This evening I was astonished at the return of Sub-Lieutenant Egerton's party, and was much distressed to learn that it was occasioned by the severe illness of Petersen. He was taken ill on the second march with cramp, and being unable to retain any food whatever, nothing could keep him warm, and he became badly frost-bitten. During the journey of sixteen miles over an extremely bad surface, although very seriously frost-bitten themselves, they succeeded in keeping life in Petersen until they arrived on board. He was badly frost-bitten in the face and feet, and had Rawson and Egerton with a noble disregard of themselves not retained some slight heat in his body, by alternately lying alongside of him whilst the other was recovering his warmth

by exercise, Petersen would undoubtedly have died."

Sub-Lieutenant Egerton himself reported to his commander that "it is with great diffidence that I presume to say anything regarding the very valuable assistance that I received from Lieutenant Rawson ; but I feel that I should fail in my duty if I omitted to bring to your notice the great advantage I derived from his advice and help. Without his unremitting exertions and cheerful spirits, my own efforts would have been unavailing to return with Petersen alive to the ship."

Petersen never recovered from the severe shock he had received, and eventually expired from exhaustion three months later.

Of the two heroes who saved his life at the risk of their own, one is now (1914) Commander-in-chief at Devonport, while the other lies at rest in the Bighi Cemetery at Malta.

Rawson and Egerton started again on their perilous errand on March 20, and after many adventures and much hardship succeeded in reaching the "Discovery" on March 24.

During the remainder of the season Rawson was incessantly employed on sledging work. Returning to the "Alert" on April 4, he pioneered a route across Robeson Channel, between the 10th and the 18th.

Meanwhile a complete scheme had been matured for the examination of as much of the unknown area

as possible by the combined efforts of sledging parties from the two ships.

On April 3, 1876, Commander A. H. Markham, with Lieutenant Parr and sledge crews, advanced in the face of great difficulties over the polar pack to lat. $83^{\circ} 20'$ N., the then highest latitude reached by man.

Lieutenant Aldrich explored the coastline to the westward for a distance of two hundred and twenty miles, penetrating as far west as Cape Alfred Ernest, whilst Lieutenant Beaumont made many important and interesting discoveries along the northern coast of Greenland.

When Beaumont set out on his memorable journey on April 20, he was accompanied by Rawson and Dr. Coppinger, with twenty-one men dragging four sledges. On May 9 Coppinger returned, whilst Rawson accompanied the party for another twelve days. During the journey Beaumont and Rawson ascended a hill, afterwards named Mount Wyatt, two thousand and fifty feet above the sea.

One of the sledging party having become seriously ill, Rawson commenced the return journey to the "Alert," hauling the sick man on the sledge. Almost snow-blind himself, and with his burden, he plodded on for twenty-three days, until he finally reached the "Alert."

From that time onwards his services were devoted to the succour of returning sledge parties. On one of his journeys from the "Alert" to the "Dis-

covery " two musk-oxen were sighted, a cow and a calf. Although the party had no gun, Rawson decided to attack the two animals with his knife only, knowing how much fresh meat was needed on board.

"As soon as they sighted us, they immediately prepared to defend themselves, standing back to back, whereupon we attacked them with stones, gradually closing in. At first they took little heed of our volleys, but as we got nearer and made better shots, they commenced to snort and bellow. When we endeavoured to outflank them, they turned their front, pivoting around on their hind legs, and always keeping back to back with their heads towards us. When nearly close enough for striking with the knife, the cow charged and three times forced me to retreat. At last I managed to plunge the knife into her side. She was round on me at once, but I managed to avoid her, and following her up, struck her three more blows. Although by this time she was bleeding profusely, I could not reach her heart with the short knife, so I lashed it to my alpenstock, and at last stabbed her in the heart with this improvised weapon, and she fell down and died. The calf, however, managed to effect its escape."

In the meantime, fears being entertained for the safety of Lieutenant Beaumont and his party, who had been exploring the north coast of Greenland to the eastward and succeeded in reaching Cape May, in lat. $82^{\circ} 54'$ N., long. 52° W., Sir George Nares

despatched Rawson and a party on a journey for the relief of Beaumont and his men.

As it turned out, the fears were justified, for when Rawson finally met Beaumont's party, the latter were in terrible distress, and sadly in need of assistance. It was undoubtedly due to Rawson's efforts on this occasion that Beaumont and his party were saved.

The latter, in his report of his journey, stated that "in my opinion Rawson acted with great judgment in planning his relief expedition. Had he come sooner he might not only have missed us altogether, but the small force at his disposal would not have been of so much service. As it was, he came in time with sufficient provisions, and by one great effort got us all into safe quarters."

Altogether, Rawson was away from the ship, sledge-travelling, for one hundred and thirty-two days; and his coolness and sound judgment, indomitable perseverance and inspiring cheerfulness, showed him to possess all the highest qualities of an Arctic explorer. To add to the difficulties of the sledging parties, they were attacked by scurvy, which increased the hardships of the work beyond measure. Yet this young officer was but twenty-three years old at the time.

The expedition returned to England in October, 1876. The "Alert" had reached a higher latitude and wintered farther north than any ship had ever done before. The results of the expedition were the

discovery of three hundred miles of new coastline, stretching from Cape Alfred Ernest in the west to Cape May in the east ; the examination of a great part of the polar ocean ; a series of meteorological, magnetic, and tidal observation in hitherto unexplored regions ; and a large geological and natural history collection.

In the following year, 1877, Rawson was appointed to the "Alexandra," bearing the flag of Admiral Hornby in the Mediterranean, and he continued to serve on that station and in the Sea of Marmora until 1880. Whilst out there he was attacked by rheumatic fever, and became so ill that he was invalided home to England, and lay for some time in Haslar Hospital. But he recovered, and before he again went to sea he was happily married to Maud, the eldest daughter of John Hegan, Esq., of Queen's Gate, Kensington, to whom he had been attached for several years.

On December 7, 1880, he joined the "Champion" corvette as First Lieutenant, and went in her to the Pacific Station ; but in the next year his good services procured for him a position which made future advancement certain. He was appointed to the Royal Yacht on October 31, 1881, and for a few months was able to live quietly with his wife at Southsea. Whilst on the Pacific Station he had received the news of the birth of his elder daughter, now the wife of Captain Arthur Duff, R.N.

When the campaign against Arabi Pasha in Egypt was decided upon in 1882, it was considered desirable that Sir Garnet Wolseley, the Commander-in-chief of the British expedition, should have a naval aide-de-camp on his staff. The General applied for the services of Lieutenant Rawson, whom he had known in Ashantee, and the Queen graciously acceded to Sir Garnet's request.

"Long before quitting England for the seat of war, Sir Garnet had decided to make the line of advance on Cairo, the objective of the expedition, by Ismailia, lying midway in the Canal, and distant from Cairo only seventy-five miles. This course was dictated by necessity, as during the autumn the whole delta is under water, this being the period of "high Nile," whilst the desert between Ismailia and Cairo afforded fair marching ground. Further, an advance from Ismailia would cover and protect the Nile. The task entrusted to the navy of seizing the Canal and disembarking a large army with all its stores was both complex and arduous. . . . Only one small pier existed at Ismailia, and ships did not anchor in Lake Timsah nearer than half a mile from the shore.

"On the night of August 15 Sir Garnet arrived at Alexandria with his staff, and on the following day the whole of the arrangements for seizing the Canal were completed. Port Said and Suez were occupied, and the whole of the Canal traffic held

up to permit of the free passage of the troops to Ismailia.

“Meantime it had been given out at Alexandria, so that it might come to the ears of Arabi, that the fleet would proceed to the bombardment of Aboukir, and that the forces at Alexandria would take part in the subsequent operations. At noon on August 19 the fleet, consisting of eight ironclads and seventeen transports, each of the former having charge of two of the latter, together with the despatch boats “Salamis” and “Helicon,” having on board respectively the military and naval Commanders-in-chief, weighed anchor in Alexandria Bay and stood to the eastward. At 4 p.m. the same day the fleet anchored in Aboukir Bay, and there they remained until night-fall, when the small craft stood close in shore and opened fire, whilst the remainder of the expedition, with the transports, steamed full speed towards Port Said, which was reached early next morning, by which time the Suez Canal throughout its length was in the possession of the British.

“Meanwhile Arabi Pasha had taken up a strongly entrenched position at Tel-el-Kebir, a village some fifty miles west-south-west of Ismailia, and here Sir Garnet resolved to surprise and defeat him.

“By the night of September 12 the army had advanced to within a few hours’ march of the enemy’s earthworks at Tel-el-Kebir. With his staff, Sir Garnet made a careful reconnaissance of the position,

and decided to storm the entrenchment with fixed bayonets at dawn.”*

“Sir Garnet, when he gave Sir Archibald Alison his final orders as to how the attack was to be made, ended by saying that he would send his naval aide-de-camp to guide us in our night march by the stars. Soon afterwards the Highland Brigade was advanced beyond Nine Gun Hill some three-quarters of a mile to a point where it had been decided we were to form into the order of advance. Our centre was marked by a line of three field telegraph-posts, which were to guide us for a short distance in the proper direction.

“Although the stars were out, the night was very dark, and having formed our order of march, we all lay down to sleep for a couple of hours, Rawson having then joined us. At one o'clock we were aroused, and soon afterwards started on our march to the enemy's lines, Rawson leading the brigade, the centre officer, a subaltern of the Cameron Highlanders, following immediately behind his horse's tail.

“The General and I rode in the interval between the two centre battalions, Rawson a few yards on our left, and rather in front; and thus we marched on, like spectres, through the night. At first we were more than sceptical as to the reliability of our guide, but the telegraph-posts completely reassured us, for as we continued to advance, each successive post was

* “Her Majesty's Navy,” by Commander C. R. Low.

passed within a yard or two of the centre officer. But soon the posts ceased, and then we were dependent entirely on Rawson's knowledge of the stairs for guidance towards the enemy's lines. That the direction throughout the night was so marvellously kept was nothing less than a special providence, for a similar night march, under any such circumstances, and in battle formation, is simply without precedent in history. Poor Rawson was the agent in this extraordinary feat, which showed on his part a self-reliance and steadiness of purpose which no one who was not there, in the heavy darkness of a moonless Egyptian night, can adequately realize. As no noise was allowed, we only spoke in whispers, and there being absolutely nothing to be seen, I asked him how it was he appeared to know the way so well. He replied: 'You see those two stars right in front of us, and a third almost directly below them—I am steering by them.' He then went on to explain to me what allowance he was making for the difference which then existed in their exact position from that in which they appeared when he had reconnoitred the place a day or two before, and seemed to be quite confident of the correctness of his calculations.

"As the first faint streaks of dawn began to appear, the enemy's pickets fired a few random shots, our men fixed bayonets, and a deep hush of expectation came over everyone. A few moments later the whole of our front became lit up in one

sudden blaze of light, and a perfect hurricane of mitraille swept through our ranks and over our heads. There was a momentary waver, and then the General sounded the 'Advance,' the preconcerted signal. Immediately the whole line, as far as the eye could see into the lessening gloom on either side, broke into a run, and with heads down, as if to avoid the hail of bullets, we all rushed forward, not knowing what might be in front. There was a perfect whirl of men as all pressed forward, and I lost sight of poor Rawson. We soon came up to the enemy's trenches, and from what I afterwards heard it was then that he received a mortal wound. The general opinion is that he was shot and fell from his horse just as he reached the trench. Being the leading man of the whole brigade, he naturally offered a good mark to the enemy. We, more fortunate than he, pressed on and on, over the parapets, and so in pursuit, until we reached the half-deserted camp of Arabi, where we heard of the loss the Navy had sustained in so gallant and promising an officer as Rawson, for his wound was considered mortal. The General, Sir Archibald Alison, said that the whole secret of the marvellous success of our steady night march and final victory was not mainly but entirely owing to the extreme accuracy with which the brigade was guided by Rawson, and so he told the Commander-in-Chief." *

* General Hutton.

Sir Garnet Wolseley, in all the hurry and urgent business in the moment of victory, found time to ride back to see his young friend, who was lying in a tent waiting to be taken down to Ismailia. Kneeling by his side, the General said: "I know you were well to the front, old fellow, all the time." He was very much affected, and when he left Rawson's side said he would telegraph to his wife.

It was generally admitted by officers in the action that it was due to Rawson's admirable guidance that there were not more casualties. He brought the brigade exactly to the right spot at the right moment—namely, just as dawn was breaking. A mistake causing even ten minutes' delay would have exposed the men to a heavy fire while charging the entrenchments.

From the first there could be no hope. He was taken on board the troopship "Carthage," but died a little before one o'clock on the morning of September 21, as she was entering Malta Harbour. A public funeral was accorded to his remains, his coffin being followed to the shore by thirty men-of-war's boats. He was buried in the Bighi Cemetery, and a cross now marks the spot.

So this bright young spirit was called away while on the full tide of success. In his short life he had already done much useful work, and he had done it heartily, thoroughly, and modestly. It was completed, and its conclusion was most glorious: "Dulce

et decorum est pro patria mori." But his loss left a sad blank, and many friends were left to mourn his early death.

Queen Victoria, on the day he died at Malta, wrote words of comfort to his young widow, and Sir Garnet telegraphed the news in the following words: "I deeply regret that Rawson, while gallantly piloting the Highland Brigade into action this morning, was shot through the body, and is now in a critical state. His gallantry was most conspicuous."

The Admiralty showed their sense of Rawson's services by promoting him to the rank of Commander, in the following terms: "Promotion specially made in Her Majesty's Fleet for valuable and gallant services rendered at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir on the 13th instant, on the recommendation of the General Officer commanding Her Majesty's forces in Egypt, to take effect from that date. Lieutenant Wyatt Rawson to be Commander."

A daughter being posthumously born to him, the Queen graciously expressed a wish to be god-mother, and the child was accordingly christened Victoria Alexandrina Wyatt. She is now the wife of Captain Frank Larken, R.N.

A monument was erected in the Portsmouth Garrison Chapel to his memory by Lord Wolseley and his staff in Egypt. It bears the following inscription:

Sacred to the Memory of
WYATT RAWSON,

COMMANDER ROYAL NAVY AND NAVAL A.D.C. TO

GENERAL SIR G. WOLSELEY, G.C.B.

HE FELL WHILE ACTING AS GUIDE

TO THE

SECOND DIVISION AT THE BATTLE OF TEL-EL-KEBIR, EGYPT,

13 SEPTEMBER, 1882,

AGED 29.

HE SERVED IN THE ASHANTEE WAR, 1873-4,

AND IN THE

ARCTIC EXPEDITION, 1875-6.

THIS TABLET IS ERECTED AS A TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM
BY LORD WOLSELEY AND THE MEMBERS OF THE PERSONAL STAFF.

In a speech at Ripon thirty-one years ago the Right Honourable Mr. Goschen uttered these memorable words :

“As one who has been civilly connected as First Lord of the Admiralty with the Navy, I need not tell you with what anxiety I watched the reports which came in with regard to the blue-jackets and naval officers, and it was pleasant to read how, from Lord Wolseley down to every regimental officer, all bore testimony to the efficiency of our sailors. . . . When the news was brought to Sir Garnet Wolseley that Lieutenant Rawson had fallen mortally wounded, in the very flush of victory, with all the great events crowding on his mind at the moment which was the crowning day of his own fortunes, and when he knew what

he had done for his country, he had time, nevertheless, to think of his wounded friend, and he galloped off the field to see him and say farewell. And what were the words with which the wounded officer received him? ‘General,’ he said, ‘did I not lead them straight?’ There you have the spirit of the English naval officer! Could any statesman at the close of his career wish to utter prouder words to his countrymen? . . . The ship of state is being driven through the waters at an increasing speed, but there are guides on high. There are the bright and fixed stars of courage, principle, self-sacrifice, and duty. Let the pilots of the state fix their eyes on these, provided they steer an un-deviating course. Happy will they be if, when their end comes, they are able to exclaim to their fellow-countrymen, in words like those of the dying Commander, ‘Have we not led you straight?’”

“Over the desert at midnight, with a rapid, silent stride,
Were marching the British soldiers and their gallant sailor-
guide;
God help them all if he failed to find his way in the gloom
aright,
For his comrades’ lives and his country’s fame were placed in
his hands that night.

“Never a faltering moment unsteadied the ranks he led;
Forward they pressed on their silent way, and he at the
column’s head;
On, while the gloom and the darkness screened from the
watchful foes,
Till the goal they sought was safely gained as the sudden
morning rose.

“Quick the alarm was sounded, quick was the onslaught made ;
Sharp was the fight, but the foe fell back from the British fire
and blade ;

Many a heart that late beat high was stilled in that hour
for aye,

And among the first of the British fell the man who had led
the way.

“Sadly they bore him back to die, and the kindly General came,
Bent o’er his friend with grateful thanks, pity, and promised
fame.

Never a word said the dying man of his pain or his hapless fate,
But the eager words came, ‘ General, didn’t I guide you
straight ?’

“‘It was a star, you know, a star——’ and he backward fell ;
His young life closed with the service done and the trust
fulfilled so well ;

And long as the English voice shall speak of the Tel-el-Kebir
fight

Will be heard the brave Commander’s name who guided them
straight that night.”

APPENDIX

THE despatches which the Admiral sent home after the Benin Expedition are here reproduced :

ADMIRALTY,
May 7, 1897.

Despatches, of which the following are copies, have been received from Rear-Admiral Harry H. Rawson, C.B., Commander-in-Chief on the Cape of Good Hope and West Coast of Africa Station, reporting operations against the King of Benin and the capture of Benin City.

H.M.S. "ST. GEORGE" AT FORCADOS,
February 27, 1897.

SIR,

With reference to the arrangements I had made for a naval expedition against Benin City, in compliance with your telegram No. 9 of the 15th idem; and in view of the absence of any reliable information in regard to Benin, and of the necessity for immediate action, I considered it advisable to organize the expedition on the largest scale which the force at my disposal would permit.

2. Between the dates of my reaching Brass (30th ultimo) and of the arrival there of Mr. R. D. R. Moor, C.M.G., H.M. Commissioner and Consul-General for the Niger Coast Protectorate (3rd instant), I obtained much valuable information about Benin, which had been collected by Captain H. L. Gallway, D.S.O. (H.M. Acting Commissioner and Consul-General).

The fact of the position of Benin City having never been astronomically fixed, however, nor the country and creeks surveyed, necessitated my having to rely in a great measure upon reports from the only three natives who had ever visited the place.

3. The few white men who have ever been to Benin appear to have taken the route from Gwato, because, I am given to understand, the King has never permitted them to approach the city by any other road; but as it is well known that there is no water on that route, and as there was every reason to believe, from the reports of natives, that there was a continuation of the Ologi Creek (fresh water) at a short distance to the eastward of the city, I decided, after carefully considering the question, to form a base at Warrigi, widen the existing path from thence to Ceri, and then, if practicable, cut my way through the forest along the left bank of the Ologi Creek to within striking distance of Benin, thus insuring a good supply of water throughout the march.

4. Seeing, however, that I could obtain no reliable information as to the nature of the country through which I proposed to march, until I could place a force at Ceri, my alternative plan was to cross the creek at Ceri by a wire suspension bridge which I had prepared to throw across (the creek here being fifty yards wide and fourteen feet deep, with a strong current), to establish a depot at Ologbo Beach, and then cut my way through the forest from thence to Benin, should there be no suitable road.

5. In this decision H.M. Consul-General and Lieutenant-Colonel B. M. Hamilton concurred; and I also arranged, after consultation with them, that, about the date of the expedition landing at Warrigi, two separate forces should be detached:

One, under Captain M. P. O'Callaghan, of H.M.S. "Philomel," to destroy Gwato; then advance to Eggbini, hold

that place until the 14th instant, and then occupy and hold Ikoro.

The other, under Captain T. MacGill, of H.M.S. "Phœbe," to stockade and hold a position four miles above Sapobar.

By despatching these separate expeditions, it was considered that two objects would be attained—

(1) To divert the enemy's attention from the intended direction of the attack on the city; and

(2) To prevent the escape of fugitives to the eastward or westward into what are now peaceful districts.

6. Whilst awaiting the arrival of the transport "Malacca" (on the 8th instant), all carriers procurable (two thousand one hundred and sixty) were collected and sent to Warrigi, where a base was established, and stores for the expedition landed.

H.M. ships "Philomel," "Phœbe," "Barrosa," "Widgeon," "Magpie," and "Alecto" were sent up the Benin River, and the "St. George," "Thesens," and "Forte" anchored off the mouth of the Forcados River.

I also hired four light draught steamers from Lagos for service as transports in the river and creeks.

7. The Niger Coast Protectorate troops were, in the meantime, moved up to Warrigi, with a party of native road-makers, to complete the road to Ceri, and to form a camp there for the whole force, thus enabling the bluejackets and marines to march to Ceri the same day they were to land at Warrigi.

This work was satisfactorily completed by the 8th instant; consequently, when the "Malacca" arrived off Forcados on the evening of that day, the expedition was ready to start.

8. I decided, after consultation with the Consul-General, to reduce the landing-party from H.M. ships to 700 fighting men, a force thought to be rather larger than actually necessary to meet the enemy, but considered

desirable with a view to the future moral effect throughout the whole Niger Coast Protectorate.

9. On the 9th instant the landing-parties from H.M. ships "St. George," "Theseus," and "Forte," and the Royal Marines from the transport "Malacca," were conveyed in the four hired steamers, via Forcados and Nana Creek, to Warrigi, where they arrived the next afternoon.

10. The following day I landed at Warrigi, and marched with the whole force to Ceri.

11. Lieutenant-Colonel B. M. Hamilton, with the Niger Coast Protectorate troops, had, before my arrival at Ceri, ascertained that any advance from that place, along either bank of the Ologi Creek, was impracticable owing to swamps.

I therefore had to adopt the alternative route mentioned in Paragraph 4.

12. On the morning of the 12th instant I commenced to move the force from Ceri, up the Ologi Creek in boats, to Ologbo landing-place (a distance of about two miles, and on the opposite bank of the creek), Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton being in command of the advance-guard, composed of two companies of Haussas and one company of bluejackets from H.M.S. "Theseus," under Lieutenant H. A. S. Fyler, of that ship.

Here the enemy made their first stand; but, after a short engagement, were driven up a forest path beyond the village of Ologbo (about a mile to the northward of the landing-place), which was then occupied.

13. On the 14th instant the whole force, carriers, and supplies having been moved to Ologbo landing-place, the scouts and advance-guard (then composed of the Haussas and marines from H.M.S. "Theseus," under Captain G. L. Beaumont, R.M.L.I., of that ship) advanced from Ologbo village along a path leading in the direction of Benin City.

After proceeding about four miles, the scouts reported the enemy in front.

From this point there was a running fight, our men firing volleys and advancing at the double, the enemy making a stand whenever there was sufficient cover, and replying briskly to our volleys from flanking paths, which they had cut parallel to the main path, until Cross Roads (a position four miles to the northward of Ologbo) was reached and occupied, this place being apparently the enemy's main camp.

14. As I had received reports from the detached forces at Gwato and Sapobar of the enemy's determined stand there, and reinforcements having been requested at both places, also, seeing that the enemy had not only shown an intention of opposing our advance throughout the whole march on the city, but that they had proved themselves much better acquainted with the method of bush-fighting than was generally supposed, I deemed it advisable to call up the remainder of the force as originally organized (see Paragraph 1), especially in view of the long line of communication with the base, which would have to be protected.

15. On the 10th instant, Captain M. P. O'Callaghan, with a force from the "Philomel," "Barrosa," and "Widgeon," occupied and destroyed Gilli-Gilli and Gwato.

He was unopposed at the former place.

At the latter he found the town deserted, and saw nothing of the enemy until half the place had been burnt, when a heavy fire was opened upon him from the neighbouring forest, which it took nearly an hour to silence. Captain M. P. O'Callaghan then destroyed the remainder of the town, and re-embarked his force with a view to carrying out his orders to advance to Eggbini and Ikoro on the arrival of the reinforcements, which he considered desirable in view of the enemy having collected in considerable numbers near Gwato.

On receiving this communication, however, I decided

that the object would, under the circumstances, be better attained by directing Captain O'Callaghan, after being reinforced, to reoccupy and hold Gwato, instead of advancing to Eggbini and Ikoro.

This was accordingly done on the 16th instant, without opposition, and steps were at once taken to fortify the camp, and to clear away the bush surrounding it. Shortly afterwards, however, the enemy opened fire from the forest, which was continued at intervals until the evening, and repeated several times during the 17th and 18th, when the enemy finally retreated.

16. On the 11th instant the other force, under Captain MacGill (with men drawn from the "Phœbe," "Alecto," and "Magpie"), which had proceeded up the Jamieson River to Sapobar, built a stockade four miles to the northward of that place, where the main road from Benin branches in two directions.

Here the party employed in building the stockade were attacked from the neighbouring forest, and a sharp engagement took place before the enemy were driven away.

This force was again attacked on the morning of the 20th instant, but the enemy were repulsed after a short engagement.

17. On the 15th instant Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, with the scouts and advance-guard, left Cross Roads camp, and advanced along the Benin path.

After he had proceeded about four miles, the enemy attacked both flanks, and continued firing at intervals from the dense forest until their camp at Agagi (a mile farther on) was reached. The enemy then retreated, and the place was occupied without further opposition.

18. It had been anticipated that there would be water at Agagi, suitable, at any rate, for the carriers; but as all the wells there were found to be dry, and each house provided with chatties, it appeared that the natives had been obliged to store their water.

19. The question of the water-supply for both fighting force and carriers became, therefore, a very serious one, since none could be found between Agagi and Ologbo Beach (ten miles), and it was improbable that there would be any between Agagi and Benin (twelve miles), which subsequently proved to be the case.

20. To keep up a sufficient supply of water for the force and carriers which I had intended to take on to Benin would have entailed great delay, which, at that stage of the march, I considered it a matter of the greatest importance to avoid, if possible.

I therefore decided to push on at once by forced marches to Benin, with a flying column, taking three days' water (at the rate of two quarts for each officer or man, and one quart for carriers per day), also four days' provisions, with the necessary ammunition, etc., the remainder of the force and supplies being left at Cross Roads camp and Ologbo Beach.

21. On the 16th instant the flying column, composed as follows, was assembled at Agagi:

Forty scouts, under Lieutenant S. E. Erskine (H.M.S. "Philomel") and Mr. Turner, of the Niger Coast Protectorate.

Two hundred and forty Niger Coast Protectorate troops, with two seven-pounder guns and a Maxim, under Lieutenant-Colonel B. M. Hamilton.

A company of sixty seamen from H.M.S. "St. George," with a Maxim, under Lieutenant Llewellyn Griffiths, of that ship.

A rocket and demolition party of ten.

Sixty marines, with a Maxim, from the transport "Malacca," under Captain G. T. Byrne, R.M.L.I.

Sixty marines from H.M.S. "Thesens," with a Maxim, under Captain Beaumont, R.M.L.I., of that ship.

The whole of the Royal Marines being under the command of Major T. H. de M. Roche, R.M.L.I., of H.M.S. "St. George."

Sixty bluejackets, with a Maxim, from H.M.S. "Theseus."

The Protectorate troops being short of officers, I lent Sub-Lieutenant J. A. Gregory, of H.M.S. "Theseus," and Sub-Lieutenant B. O. F. Phibbs, of H.M.S. "St. George," for duty with them.

My personal and general staff consisted of—

Captain G. Le C. Egerton, of H.M.S. "St. George," Chief of the Staff.

Lieutenant W. N. England, Flag-Lieutenant, A.D.C. and Camp Master.

Commander R. H. S. Bacon, H.M.S. "Theseus," Chief of Intelligence Department, who was also placed in the advance-guard with Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton.

Lieutenant Stuart Nicholson, of H.M.S. "St. George," who was in charge of the arrangements for the water-supply.

Lieutenant R. G. Gregory, of H.M.S. "St. George," Staff Officer.

The carriers were in charge of Lieutenant E. R. Pears, of H.M.S. "Forte," and Lieutenant W. H. Cowan, of H.M.S. "Barrosa."

The medical officers were:

Staff-Surgeon E. R. Dimsey, of H.M.S. "Phœbe," and Surgeon C. J. Fyfe, of H.M.S. "St. George."

Mr. R. D. R. Moor, C.M.G., H.M. Commissioner and Consul-General, and Captain Child, of the Niger Coast Protectorate Yacht "Ivy," accompanied the headquarters.

Lieutenant-Colonel B. M. Hamilton was placed in command of the advance-guard, and Captain C. Campbell, C.B., of H.M.S. "Theseus," in command of the rear-guard, the marines from the "Malacca" forming a reserve under my own immediate orders.

22. Leaving Agagi at 6.30 a.m. on the 17th instant, the flying column cut itself free from the base and advanced to Awoko, arriving there at 2 p.m., after

having been harassed the whole way by constant attacks from the bush, the advance being necessarily very slow.

That night the camp was fired into.

23. On the 18th instant the column left Awoko at 6.30 a.m., the only alteration in the formation of the column being that the marines of H.M.S. "Theseus" (who up to this point had been with the advance-guard), now changed positions with the "St. George's" "A" Company.

During the whole of this day the head and both flanks of the column were constantly attacked.

At 1 p.m. a stockade was come across, commanding a narrow causeway with a deep ravine on each side, and defended by a few guns. These were silenced, and the stockaded path cleared with guncotton.

About three hundred yards farther on, as the enemy appeared to be in considerable force in front, a halt was made, and the seven-pounders and rockets were fired with extreme elevation over the supposed strongest position of the enemy, and where Benin City was thought to be.

About a mile beyond this we suddenly emerged from the bush path into a causeway about fifty yards wide, running at right angles to our path, with dense bush on each side. Here a very heavy fire was opened upon our men, and the enemy were, for the first time, actually seen, a body of them attempting to charge the head of our column as we advanced out of the narrow bush path. A Maxim, however, and a few volleys from the "St. George's" "A" Company soon drove them back into the bush. There were also some heavy guns fired from the causeway which surrounded the King's compound.

An advance was at once made along the road to the King's palace, under a rather heavy fire from both sides, which, at such close quarters, did us considerable damage.

The King's compound was then occupied; the killed and wounded brought in; the carrier column and rear-guard marched up from the narrow path, where they had been halted until the enemy had been cleared out; and the men's water-bottles filled, leaving us with only one quart of water per man as a reserve.

The heat along this causeway was terrific, and the men (who had been marching from 6.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.) were much exhausted; but I am proud to report that not a single officer or man fell out from his place after leaving Cross Roads.

24. All tents and coverings having been left behind, the best arrangements possible were made to shelter the men for the night.

25. At daylight on the 19th instant two-thirds of the force, with all the carriers, were sent off as a water party, the remainder of the force defending the camp.

The water party returned in about three hours, having found a very good running stream about two miles distant.

26. In the afternoon a strong force was marched out, and destroyed Chief Ijuma's compound.

27. Orders had been sent to Ologbo Beach for provisions and ammunition to be forwarded on to Benin.

Also for the "St. George's" steam pinnace and two Jakri canoes to try and find their way by the Ologi Creek to the city, with a view of conveying the wounded down by water. The command of this party was given to Lieutenant T. F. Michell, of H.M.S. "St. George," whose report is attached (Enclosure No. 7).

28. I had intended returning with the whole force on the 20th instant, but as the Protectorate troops were short of ammunition, and had no stores up with them, I deemed it necessary to place them in a defensible

position before I left the city. I therefore remained until the morning of the 22nd.

29. The 20th and 21st were occupied in preparing a defensive position for the Protectorate force and in getting water for our march down.

30. Two parties were sent out to destroy the Queen-Mother's and Chief Ichudi's compounds; also the sacrificial and crucifixion trees, and the whole of the ju-ju houses.

31. The King, with all the inhabitants, having disappeared, I was unable to carry out their Lordships' wish that he should be captured.

32. We heard from some liberated slaves that no white prisoners had been brought to Benin City, but all the effects of the late ill-fated expedition were found in the King's palace.

33. The Protectorate ammunition and stores arrived on the night of the 20th instant.

34. At 4 p.m. on the 21st instant a fire, started by carriers, spread in a few minutes over the whole town; and by the promptitude of Captain Campbell, of H.M.S. "Theseus," the wounded were got out while the temporary hospital was actually on fire.

Some arms, ammunition, and most of our provisions, were burnt. Fortunately, however, the "Forte's" company, under Lieutenant F. R. Harrold, arrived within an hour with a fresh supply, and the whole white force was thus enabled to start for the base on the morning of the 22nd instant.

35. I left, for the use of the Protectorate force, two Maxims and one rocket tube, with the necessary ammunition; also the Martini-Henry rifles which had been issued to the scouts.

I also transferred to them two of the four days' provisions brought up by the "Forte's" company.

36. The base at Warrigi was reached on the 24th, after

a trying return journey for the wounded, who, however, were safely brought down.

37. The whole of the force were re-embarked by the evening of the 27th instant.

38. The Sapobar force, under Captain MacGill, re-embarked and returned to Warrigi on the 25th.

39. The Gwato force, under Captain O'Callaghan, re-embarked in their ships on the 27th instant.

40. As on the march up, so on the march down, not a single officer or man of the flying column fell out.

41. I much regret to have to report the following casualties during the expedition, as detailed in Enclosure No. 1 :

(a) Killed in action :

2 officers,

8 men (5 whites, 3 blacks).

(b) Wounded in action :

6 officers (including 1 native officer),

44 men (22 whites, 22 blacks).

(c) Deaths from the effects of climate :

1 officer,

4 men (whites).

(d) Deaths from accident :

2 men (1 white, 1 black).

(e) Seventy-two cases of small-pox occurred amongst the native carriers.

In an expedition like this has been, where unusual hardships have been endured from excessive heat, forced marches, shortness of water, and even of provisions, to say nothing of the whole march having been harassed by an unseen enemy, I consider that every officer and man under my command has merited the highest praise; and although I am aware that only a comparative few can hope to be rewarded at present, I feel it my duty to place on record the names of many others also, who

have done such good work that I trust their Lordships will, in any case, bear them in mind for future reward.

Then follows a long list of officers whom the Admiral specially recommends to their Lordships' notice. He adds :

I have considered it my duty to specially mention what may appear at first sight a large number of officers, but the duties of the expedition have necessarily been so varied, and its organization so hurried, that a vast amount of work fell upon all the officers employed in the different departments.

Their Lordships will, perhaps, more fully realize this when it is remembered that Benin City was taken within five weeks of the receipt of the telegram ordering the expedition to be organized, and that the force only met for the first time, from widely different parts of the world, the evening before the expedition started up the river.

I have, etc.,

HARRY H. RAWSON.

(Rear-Admiral, Commander-in-Chief.)

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KULU AND LAHOUL.

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